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**SICKERT**



# SICKERT

*edited by LILLIAN BROWSE with an  
essay on his life and notes on his paintings;  
and with an essay on his art by  
R. H. WILENSKI*

FABER AND FABER LIMITED

*24 Russell Square London*

*First published in Mcmxlili  
by Faber and Faber Limited  
24 Russell Square, London, W.C.1  
Second impression June Mcmxliv  
Printed in Great Britain by  
The Shenval Press, Hertford  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**H**er Majesty the Queen has graciously permitted me to reproduce one of the paintings in her possession. I am also indebted to the authorities of the Public Galleries and Museums who have allowed me to reproduce pictures to private owners who have supplied me with prints; and to the members of the National Gallery Publications Department who have done so much of the photography.

My sincere thanks are due to Mrs. Sickert for her help and encouragement; to Miss Sylvia Gosse, Miss Ethel Sands, Miss Hudson, Mrs. Swinton, the Hon. Mrs. Glyn, Mrs. Holland and Mr. Clifford Hall for much information; and to the Leicester Galleries, the Redfern Gallery, the Beaux Arts Gallery, and Messrs. Reid and Lefevre for supplying prints from their collections and for helping to trace various pictures.

I especially wish to thank Mr. R. H. Wilenski for his essay on 'Sickert's Art', for his interest in the publication, and for his readiness to help and advise on all occasions.

L. B.



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# SICKERT'S LIFE

by Lillian Browse

Walter Richard Sickert was born in Munich on May 31st, 1860. His father was Oswald Adalbert Sickert, a Danish artist and himself the son of an artist. His mother was English and his maternal grandmother was Irish. When Sickert was born his father was employed as a draughtsman and wood engraver on the German comic journal the *Fliegende Blätter*. When he was eight the family settled in England where he went to school. He had four brothers and a sister. His father, who had become a German subject by the conquest of Schleswig-Holstein, was naturalized in England. Sickert matriculated at King's College when he was seventeen. He wanted to be a painter but his father warned him against this uncertain method of earning his living. Since boyhood he had a passion for the theatre, so his second choice was the stage. From the outset he had a sense of quality, recognizing the best and making straight for it; and thus during his three years on the stage he managed to work under Irving, Mrs. Kendal and Isabel Bateman. But he never got further than minor parts, he still felt that his 'métier' was painting, and he left the stage in 1881. In that year he embarked upon what was to be his real career by becoming a pupil at the Slade School. Circumstances smoothed his path, for he became engaged to Ellen Cobden, daughter of Richard Cobden, the Liberal politician. His fiancée had money of her own, and the financial prospect being thus more secure, his father no longer obstructed Sickert's wish to study art.

When he entered the Slade it was under the directorship of Alphonse Legros; but he did not remain long enough to be influenced by this tuition, for a chance encounter with Whistler altered the course of his art education. Whistler took a fancy to him, sensed his qualities, and invited him to work in his studio and help to print his etchings.

Whistler at that time was recovering from the effects of his libel suit against Ruskin, four years earlier. The jury had awarded him a farthing damages, but he had to pay his own costs and this, with other financial difficulties, had caused him to sell his Tite Street house with its contents. In 1882 he was largely engaged with portraits as well as etchings; his portrait of Lady Meux (*Arrangement in Black No. 5*) was acclaimed in the Paris Salon; he was commissioned to paint Lady Archibald Campbell as well as a second portrait of Lady Meux (*Harmony in Rose and Grey*); he also painted his friends the violinist, Sarasate, and the French art critic, Théodore Duret. Sickert watched him paint all these pictures and he himself painted a small panel of Duret while Whistler painted his large portrait.

In 1883 Whistler sent the *Portrait of My Mother* to the Paris Salon and asked Sickert

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to take it over; at the same time he gave him letters of introduction to Manet and Degas. Sickert did not see Manet who was already seriously ill with gangrene and died that year; but he did see Wilde who was a friend of his own family, and who, aged twenty-seven, was then writing *The Duchess of Padua*; and he was well received by Degas, whose interest and friendship he was to enjoy till Degas died in 1917. On his return from Paris he went with Whistler to St. Ives where they spent part of the winter; and in the following year he exhibited his first picture at the Society of British Artists, not under his own name, but on Whistler's insistence as 'Pupil of Whistler'.

In 1885, when he was twenty-five, he married Ellen Cobden. After a honeymoon journey which included visits to Scheveningen, Munich, Vienna and Milan, they spent the summer in Dieppe. Here Sickert again met Degas and he was welcomed into the circle of Degas' friends—painters and writers who frequented Dieppe at that time. This is recorded in Degas' *Portraits d'amis sur la scène* which includes a portrait of Sickert together with those of Ludovic and Daniel Halévy, Jacques-Emile Blanche, Henri Gervex and Boulanger Cavé. In the winter Sickert and his wife returned to London where they set up house in Broadhurst Gardens, Hampstead.

For the next fifteen years Sickert made London his headquarters. But he and his wife went regularly in the summer to Dieppe and thus he was able to keep contact with Degas and his other French friends. In Dieppe, however, he did not confine himself to social pleasures; he also worked hard and for this purpose, from time to time, he would mysteriously disappear for days on end; he rented old sheds in remote corners of the town which he used as store-houses for his materials and he made as many friends among the working folk as among the fashionable world. In London he proceeded in much the same way; he had social contacts and contacts with artists on the one hand, and on the other a private working life which took him to queer places where he improvised studios and workshops. His house in Broadhurst Gardens had a studio on the top floor; but he soon rented a second workroom in Robert Street, off the Hampstead Road; and then he took others. All his life he had this passion for taking rooms; even when finances did not warrant it he still insisted on accumulating studios, fitting them up with stoves and leaving them after a short while. When his friends remonstrated with him over his impracticability he simply said, 'I know I am going to paint a masterpiece here.' These rooms were generally in what is known as 'mean streets' and on this Sir William Rothenstein has commented: 'Sickert's genius for discovering the dreariest house and most forbidding rooms in which to work was a source of wonder and amusement to me. He himself was so fastidious in his person, in his manners, in the choice of his clothes; was he affecting a kind of dandyism *à rebours*?'<sup>1</sup> Of Sickert's contacts in London in the later 'eighties and in the 'nineties the most important were with the group of artists who founded the New English Art Club in 1886, and with the artists and writers who later contributed to the *Yellow*

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Rothenstein, *Men and Memories* (Faber and Faber, 1931), vol. 1, pp. 167-168.

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*Book*, the famous quarterly edited by Henry Harland for which Aubrey Beardsley designed the covers of the first four volumes.

The history of the New English Art Club is well known. I need only recall that the founder members were Fred Brown, Tonks, Wilson Steer, D. S. MacColl and George Moore; that certain members broke away to form what was later known as the Newlyn School; and that among those who remained in what began to be considered the 'Impressionist' wing of the Club were Brown, Steer, Francis James, Theodore Roussel, Francis Bate and Sickert himself. In addition Sickert kept in touch with Whistler although he was no longer his pupil in the real sense; he visited William Morris at Chiswick, for the two families were friends; he was put up for membership of the Arts Club by Charles Keene for whose art he had a great and lasting admiration; and through his wife's connections he came into contact with various politicians, among them Charles Bradlaugh of whom he painted two portraits one of which I reproduce (Pl. 7). Of Sickert's paintings from 1884 to 1890 I also reproduce the 'genre' portrait *The Acting Manager* (Pl. 1), four interiors of London Music Halls (Pls. 2-5) and the full-length portrait of Wilson Steer (Pl. 6).

During the 'nineties he exhibited frequently at the New English Art Club attracting attention especially with the *Portrait of George Moore* (now in the Tate Gallery) in 1891. In 1893 he opened his first art school in Chelsea and he also conducted evening classes in his Robert Street studio. In 1894-5 the *Yellow Book* contained reproductions of his paintings; in the first number he was represented by his painting *The Old Oxford Music Hall* and a pen drawing titled *A Lady Reading* (his fellow artists in this number being Leighton, Joseph Pennell, Rothenstein, Laurence Housman, J. T. Nettleship, Charles Furse, Robert Anning Bell and, as already stated, Aubrey Beardsley). And then in 1895 when he was thirty-five he went for the first time to Venice. Of his work in these years I reproduce portrait impressions of two friends of the *Yellow Book* circle (Pls. 8 and 9) as well as a drawing of one of them (Pl. 9a); and two pictures resulting from his first visit to Venice (Pls. 10 and 11). He was still intimate with Whistler and it is recorded that Whistler worked in his studio in 1893 and was patron of his Chelsea art school. But Whistler was notoriously tyrannical in his friendships and also notoriously jealous of his pupils growing up; and this particular pupil was beginning to look with an informed and critical eye on the master's own methods and productions; in particular he had begun to observe that the number of Whistler's successes was much smaller than the number of his failures and he had the 'impertinence' to comment in that sense: 'I once asked him,' Sickert has related, 'how many of his pictures he had finished and how many he had left off working on. We were walking along Piccadilly at the time, Whistler stopped and I wondered if he was going to push me through a plate-glass window, as he had once done to Seymour Haden. Then he said, "Young man, you are beginning to know too much" . . .' For those who knew Whistler this clearly augured trouble; and the trouble came in 1897 when Pennell brought the 'Lithograph Case' against Sickert and Frank Harris. Sickert had written an article in the *Saturday Review*—of

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which Harris was editor—and in this he stated that Pennell's method of transferring drawings from paper on to the stone instead of drawing directly upon the stone was not true lithography (which was rather 'splitting hairs' but technically right). What happened when the case was heard has been described by Rothenstein who appeared as a witness for Sickert: 'Whistler chose to regard Sickert's comments on Pennell as a veiled onslaught on his own methods. . . . During his cross-examination Sickert suavely admitted that there was a spice of malice in his article. Sir Edward Clark, counsel for Pennell, satisfied with this at once sat down. Pennell won his case.'<sup>1</sup> This was a double blow to Sickert; financially because he shared the damages with Frank Harris and had to borrow the money from his brother-in-law, repaying it some twenty-five years later with compound interest; and also because Whistler gave evidence against him and described him as 'an insignificant and irresponsible person'; it meant the end of a friendship with an idol of his youth.

At this time Sickert was also having difficulties in his private life. These culminated in a divorce from his wife in 1899 when he left England for what was destined to be six years. He went first to Dieppe where Jacques-Emile Blanche tells us he was '*dans un état de dépression morale et physique*.'<sup>2</sup> Blanche helped him by urging the Paris dealers to take him up and in 1900 he was able to write 'Paris has taken kindly to my brush . . . very able dealers'.<sup>3</sup> He now opened a school in Paris though his headquarters was still at Dieppe; and within the next four years he paid two long visits to Venice. Of his pictures in this period 1900-1904 I reproduce seven Dieppe scenes (Pls. 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18 and 19), one Paris theatre interior with the drawing from which it was painted (Pls. 15 and 15a) and five pictures painted in Venice (Frontispiece and Pls. 20-23).

He returned to England in 1905 when he was forty-five. In 'Londra Benedetta' he took a studio in Fitzroy Street and rooms in a house on the corner of Mornington Crescent and Granby Street; after a break of many years he started etching again and kept his press in Augustus Street near the Caledonian Market. His friends now included Spencer Gore, Lucien Pissarro, Harold Gilman, Augustus John and Henry Lamb. These artists held afternoon receptions in Sickert's studio in Fitzroy Street where they showed their latest pictures and sold them for modest sums; later they were joined by Robert Bevan, Charles Ginner and Walter Bayes. Sickert conceived a particular affection for Gore (who was then twenty-seven); he also especially admired his work; and he has stated that he learned much from Gore. But he also had much to give to these associates. We see his influence, for example, in the foundation of the Allied Artists Association (1908) in which the No-Jury principle of the Paris Salon des Indépendants was the rule. He also exerted influence as a teacher, for he began about this time to teach at the Westminster Institute Art School; and in partnership with Madeleine Knox he started a school for etching which was eventually

<sup>1</sup> Sir William Rothenstein, *op. cit.* vol. 1, p. 343.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Blanche to Rothenstein: Sir William Rothenstein, *op. cit.* vol. 1, p. 342.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Sickert to Steer. Emmons: *The Life and Opinions of Walter Richard Sickert* (Faber and Faber, 1941), p. 89.

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fixed at Rowlandson House, Hampstead Road (where Miss Knox's place was taken by Sylvia Gosse.)

These years mark the beginning of what is now known as his Camden Town Period which it is convenient to divide into two halves (1905-1910 and 1910-1914). Of the pictures painted in the first five years I reproduce twelve characteristic examples (Pls. 25-36) as well as two etchings and a drawing relating to the pictures under which they are reproduced (Pls. 26a, 28a and 29a). Most of these pictures were actually painted in the various rooms in North London which Sickert occupied at that time and which I have mentioned above; he also used a room (which he shared with Gore) in Brecknock Road and about 1909 he took another room in Mornington Crescent which he used on and off for three or four years. Some pictures were also painted in a room in Grosvenor Road on the river which he took in order to be near his teaching work at Westminster. In my 'Notes on the Plates' I indicate in most cases where the pictures were painted.

Throughout these years he kept in touch with dealers in Paris who were interested in his work; in 1907 and 1909 he had exhibitions at the Galerie Bernheim and he sold some of his pictures at the Hôtel Drouot (the Christie's of Paris). He went frequently also to Dieppe where he had a house at Neuville.

The second half of the Camden Town Period (1910-1914) was a time of notable happenings in the English art world. The winter 1910-1911 saw the first Post-Impressionist exhibition at the Grafton Galleries and the formation of the Camden Town Group with Gore as President and Sickert and Wyndham Lewis among the members. Between 1910 and 1913 Sickert held two one-man exhibitions at the Stafford and the Carfax galleries; he contributed a series of drawings to the *New Age*; and was elected a member of the etching and engraving group known as the Society of Twelve. Most of the *New Age* drawings were based on the 'man and woman' theme, but few, if any, became the subjects of oil paintings. At the end of this period, in 1913, the Camden Town Group was enlarged and re-named the London Group, the original members being joined by, among others, W. Adeney, David Bomberg, Jacob Epstein, Eric Gill, Sylvia Gosse, Thérèse Lessore, Paul Nash, John Nash, C. R. W. Nevinson, Walter Taylor and Edward Wadsworth. Sickert made a speech at the opening of the first exhibition (in Brighton) and Wyndham Lewis wrote a foreword to the catalogue. These years were also important in Sickert's private life, as in 1911 he married for the second time. His wife was Christine Drummond Angus, daughter of a Scottish leather merchant and a former pupil at Rowlandson House. The marriage took place at the Paddington Registry Office; Spencer Gore was best man. The honeymoon was spent at Dieppe where they sold the house at Neuville and bought a villa—the Villa d'Aumale—at Envermeu. On their return to London the couple first took a house in Harrington Square (off the Hampstead Road) and then moved to Gloucester Crescent in the same neighbourhood. But Sickert still retained for working purposes his room in Mornington Crescent and the studio at Rowlandson House. Examples of the pictures painted in London between 1910 and 1913 are reproduced (Pls. 37,

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39-42). I also reproduce a woodland scene and a drawing of a Château done at this time near Dieppe (Pls. 38 and 38a).

At the beginning of 1914 Sickert was living in Kildare Gardens, Paddington, and he had taken a new studio in Red Lion Square, W.1. In the summer he went with his wife to Dieppe and they were there at the outbreak of war. Returning to England as soon as possible, Sickert closed Rowlandson House and painted the *Soldiers of King Albert the Ready* (Pl. 43) in the Red Lion Square studio. Then characteristically he began to take more studios and he worked during the war years in a room in Warren Street and in Nos. 15 and 8 Fitzroy Street, two rooms which faced each other; No. 8 (Whistler's old studio) he used as a school. In 1917 he gave up the house in Kildare Gardens and took one in Camden Road. I reproduce three pictures and a drawing done in these quarters (Pls. 44-46 and 45a). During the war years Sickert, having to spend the summers in England, worked at Chagford in Devon in 1915 and at Bath in 1916 and 1917. Of his works at Bath in this period (when he devoted himself entirely to landscape) I reproduce four paintings, two drawings and an etching (Pls. 47-50 and 47a-49a).

The next four years (1919-22) were saddened for Sickert by the loss of his wife. As soon as the war ended they had gone together to Dieppe; they had sold their villa and had bought a new one, the Maison Mouton, formerly a gendarmerie—Sickert's *Christine buys a Gendarmerie* (Pl. 51) recording the transaction. Christine had fallen ill and they had returned to London where the Eldar Gallery arranged an important Sickert exhibition with a preface to the illustrated catalogue by Clive Bell. Then in October, 1920, when they were back again in Dieppe, Christine died. In his distress Sickert was much helped by Sylvia Gosse who was in Dieppe before and after Christine's death; he was attached to her as a personality and respected her as an artist. Though her work is not as widely known as it should be, she is in fact an extremely accomplished painter and all concerned in Sickert's life and work owe much to her loyal friendship and devotion to his interests. The pictures which Sickert painted during this difficult autumn from drawings done in the summer months include the well-known *Baccarat* series from which I reproduce two examples (Pls. 54 and 55) together with a café and two circus subjects (Pls. 52, 53 and 53a). In the summer of 1921, restless and unable to remain at the Maison Mouton so full of memories, he took a furnished flat in the Rue Aguado where he painted the series of bedroom scenes of which I reproduce two (Pls. 56 and 57); then he moved again to a flat a little way along the plage and here Victor Lecour posed for him (Pl. 58). This was the last picture he painted in Dieppe, for in 1922 he returned to England and only went back to Dieppe to clear up his things and give up the flat. In London he lived in his studio at No. 15 Fitzroy Street, led the life of a recluse and hardly painted at all; the depression, dispelled to some extent by work at Dieppe, seemed to come down on him again. Soon after this John Wheatley introduced him to Charles Jackson, a dealer in Manchester, who bought some of his paintings; it was when he was on a visit to Manchester that he decided to open an Art School there which the Jacksons

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did all they could to arrange for him. He used to go up to Manchester once a week, taking the mid-day train up, teach in the evening and come back by the breakfast train in the morning, writing articles in the train. Mr. Stephenson, then editor of a Lancashire paper, describing visits to him at this period, has told us that Sickert, greatly discouraged at the time, was pleased to turn his mind to writing articles for the Lancashire papers as he was doing for the *Burlington* and the *Morning Post*. Mr. Stephenson bought some of his work and urged the Lancashire galleries and collectors to do the same; he also played a part in securing Sickert's election as an Associate of the Royal Academy.<sup>1</sup> It was Orpen who actually put him up for election; bathing together one day at Dieppe, Sickert told Orpen that he would like to belong to the Academy; Orpen was delighted and Sickert was made an Associate in 1924 when he was sixty-four. Sickert declared himself very pleased with the election: 'I am proud' he said, 'to belong to the Academy of which Turner was a member'; and he took seriously his duties in the Royal Academy Schools where he acted as a visiting teacher in 1926; he gave of himself most generously in these classes, practically abandoning his own work for weeks; and in a very short while he induced the students to comply with the procedures he required. He went almost daily to the schools, arriving punctually at ten o'clock faultlessly dressed. One of his students has told me of his courtesy there to an ageing Italian model whom he greeted each morning by kissing her hand while he paid her compliments in his best Italian. To the students he would shout 'Paint direct and don't maul your paint', and so that these words should not be forgotten he would scrawl them on the wall in chalk. On composing a picture he would say: 'Let us start with a piece of furniture—a table, a chair, or a bed. Relate your figures to this setting and let us have them doing something—making love, quarrelling, misconducting themselves—as you please—but *doing* something.' As long as the students applied themselves seriously he always found a word of encouragement. 'Go on,' was his advice, 'don't worry about your bad paintings, like a balloon your good work will carry the bad up with it'. One day on leaving the Schools he met one of his pupils in Burlington Gardens; instead of the usual greeting he caught hold of the lapels of the young man's coat, 'You and I are going to have a talk on superficiality' he said. 'My colleagues at the Academy think that finish means smooth neat paint. Don't believe them. Finish consists in relating the figures and objects, the one to the other and to their setting. You must be able to walk about in a picture. It should give you the sensation of something exciting happening, taking place in a box as it were, only the front of the box has been taken away so that you may look inside.' Passers-by bumped into them but still he went on: 'Paint direct sketches from nature and your pictures from drawings. Don't plaster Tuesday's folds on top of Monday's . . .' In his own practice he followed the doctrines which he preached. The *Signor Battistini* which I reproduce here (Pl. 59) from this period, was painted from a pencil drawing made on an envelope while the singer was performing.

<sup>1</sup> W. H. Stephenson, *Sickert: The Man and his Art: Random Reminiscences* (privately published), 1940.



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In 1926 Sickert married Thérèse Lessore. She was, like Sylvia Gosse, an old friend of his; a painter, coming from a family of painters, whose work Sickert had long admired and whose artistic integrity he greatly respected; of her he once wrote: 'She seems to me to have the merits that all the groups would like to claim . . . I cannot see her pictures going out of date.'<sup>1</sup> A new period in Sickert's life now began. He went with his wife to Brighton where he started a series of 'Echoes'—paintings done chiefly from wood blocks by the Victorian illustrators—Sir John Gilbert, Kenny Meadows, Georgie Bowers and others. The next year he returned to London; bought a house in Quadrant Road, Islington, and had, as usual, various other studios, including one in Kemp Town and one in Noel Street overlooking the Regent's Canal where he painted *Fading Memories of Sir Walter Scott* (Pl. 61) and the well-known *Hanging Gardens of Islington* of which I reproduce an engraving (Pl. 61a). He also started a new school at No. 1 Highbury Fields advertised as for 'male students only' with the statement, 'No models will be employed at all'. There were only six or seven applicants among whom were Mr. Mark Oliver, Lord Methuen, Mr. Morland Lewis and Dr. Robert Emmons—the last to be later the author of *The Life and Opinions of Walter Richard Sickert* in which he has given us a witty and instructive account of the school's proceedings.<sup>2</sup> This school had a very short life and Sickert finally used the room as a studio where he painted the first sketch for *The Raising of Lazarus* (Pl. 62); here too he painted portraits of Winston Churchill and Hugh Walpole and *Sir Nigel Playfair* in 'She Stoops to Conquer' (Pl. 63) which was followed by other theatrical portraits.

In this period just reviewed (1926-30) Sickert's reputation with the general public very sensibly increased. Hitherto he had been an artist admired very much by a few people, mainly of the type labelled 'highbrow'. Now a wider public began to recognize that they had long been ignoring a great artist and a very remarkable man. In 1927 he had been elected President of the R.B.A. (from which he resigned some twenty months later). In 1928 there was a much admired exhibition of his work at the Savile Gallery with a preface to the catalogue by Hugh Walpole. A larger 'Retrospective Exhibition' was held at the Leicester Galleries the next year, and about three years after that the Redfern Gallery showed sixty of his early works and sold every available picture. And now at last, in the world of picture dealers, there was something of a Sickert 'boom'; but as most of his pictures had passed out of his hands at low prices he did not directly benefit himself. He had always adopted the system of selling his pictures in bulk to the dealers, one of his favourite practices being to make the dealer bid for a pile of canvases with their faces turned to the wall. 'Sickert thought he was being such a good business man when he did that' Steer once told me, 'but actually he would have made much more money by selling in a more orthodox manner.' When the boom came, the dealers—as the phrase goes—'cashed in'.

In 1931 the Sickerts moved to a house in Barnsbury Park, the studios in Kemp

<sup>1</sup> Article in the *New Age*, May 28, 1914. Quoted Emmons, *op. cit.* p. 203-204.

<sup>2</sup> Emmons, *op. cit.* p. 254.

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Town and Noel Street were given up and another taken in Whitcher Place, Camden Road; the Leicester Galleries with whom Sickert had satisfactory arrangements in his later years, and who were then the principal agents for his pictures, held an exhibition of twenty-two 'Echoes' which aroused much controversy; and Manchester University made him an Honorary LL.D. At this period he was often to be seen in the Caledonian Market. He loved to dress like a tramp and wander about the market—his 'idea of heaven' he termed it. One day he was there in an old trench-coat and an ancient straw hat with broken brim. His trousers were stuffed into brown leather army boots that reached almost to his knees, and as the boots had no laces, the upper parts jumped backwards and forwards as he walked. Nearby was a second-hand piano. 'Mind if I try it?' he asked the owner of the stall. 'Go ahead Guv'nor'; thus encouraged, the greatest artist in England sat down at the piano, rattled off an old music-hall tune and then spun himself round several times on the revolving stool. 'Very fine tone,' he gravely assured the owner and wandered off through the crowd. 'Rummy ole bloke,' commented the stall holder—'I wonder 'oo he is.' In 1932 when Sadler's Wells was in financial difficulties Sickert gave the *Raising of Lazarus* to be sold at Christie's for the benefit of the theatre. Ironically enough the Sickerts themselves had financial troubles soon afterwards; but a group of friends and admirers raised a sum sufficient to clear away old debts and smooth the path of the immediate future. In 1934 Sickert left London and took a house at St. Peters-in-Thamet. Although he was now seventy-four he was still tremendously active. He taught at the Thanet School of Art; produced several full-length portraits commissioned by Sir James Dunn, including those of himself, Lord Beaverbrook and Lord Castlerosse; and painted a number of interiors in which he himself appears as a bearded old man in domestic surroundings. Here too he painted more 'Echoes' and theatrical subjects. In 1934 he was made a full Academician, but resigned the following year as a protest when the President of the Royal Academy refused to sign a petition against the removal of Epstein's statues from Rhodesia House. He remained at St. Peters-in-Thamet until 1938; then he returned to Bath, where he took a Georgian house at Bathampton. He was now nearly eighty, but he was soon teaching regularly each week at the Bath School of Art and painting pictures of the city. When at last he became infirm and unable to move afield he continued to paint in his own house and garden.

In 1941 the National Gallery arranged a one-man exhibition of Sickert's paintings; this exhibition, one of the series of war-time exhibitions held there, contained one hundred and thirty-two paintings and drawings of all periods; it was visited by over thirty thousand people headed by the Queen, herself a lender. Unfortunately Sickert was not well enough to travel to London for the exhibition which was a national tribute crowning his career.

He died quite suddenly on January 22nd, 1942, in his eighty-second year. There was an unfinished canvas on his easel.



# SICKERT'S ART

by R. H. Wilenski

*His talent evolved that something new which justifies an artist for his existence.*  
—Sickert on Whistler.

**D**id Sickert evolve 'that something new which justifies an artist for his existence?' Can we find in his life's work a quality or qualities of which we can say: 'There lies the special contribution made by Sickert; if Sickert had remained an actor the history of painting would now be poorer by just that?'

It is commonly said that Sickert's contribution was a link between the French painting and the English painting of his time. And to answer our question it may well be that to discuss this suggestion is as good a beginning as another. For of all the English artists of his period Sickert indeed had the closest connection with the art of France. He was often back and forth across the Channel, he had a house in France at various periods, he knew well a number of French artists and he was aware of all the aspects of that great renaissance in modern art which, begun by the Impressionists before his day, was carried on in his own time by the Post-Impressionists, the Cubists and so forth. It is therefore reasonable to reject purely local standards in studying his works and to assess them by the standards of his contemporaries on the international plane.

To do this we must begin by remembering that Sickert was an exact contemporary of Seurat. There was a space of six months only between their birthdays. Sickert died at eighty-one in January, 1942; it would have been quite possible for Seurat to have survived him by ten years or more. This means that Sickert was of the generation of the men who launched the modern movement in art in the Salon des Indépendants in the 'eighties; he was also of the same generation as Van Gogh and Gauguin (for though both were older both became painters at the same time as he did); he was four years older than Lautrec and seven years older than Pierre Bonnard, the outstanding figure of the generation which followed his own. It also means that he was a late, an astonishingly late, starter. For he had done little or nothing original when Van Gogh died in 1890 and Seurat died in 1891 and he had only found his feet a year or two when Lautrec died in 1901 and Gauguin died in 1903.

This late starting was partly due to the accidents which made him at twenty-two an apprentice to Whistler (who was forty-eight), and shortly afterwards a protégé of Degas (who was also just on fifty); and partly to the influence of the Anglo-French dilettanti who frequented Dieppe. If his luck had been different he might have begun by meeting the artists of his own generation and by joining Seurat, Gauguin, Van

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Gogh and Lautrec in their adventures. But that did not happen. He began by printing etchings for Whistler (who fifteen years later, in 1898, was still saying '*Quant à la peinture il n'y a que Degas et moi*' and refusing a proposal to invite Cézanne to exhibit in his International Society). He began by imitating, on Mondays, Whistler's paintings and using mixtures taken, as he has told us himself, from Whistler's palette, and by imitating, on Tuesdays, the pictures which Degas had painted ten, fifteen or twenty years earlier. He might have begun by haunting the little back room in the Goupil Gallery in Paris where Theo Van Gogh had pictures by his contemporaries, or by examining, with Tanguy, stacks of pictures in Cézanne's deserted studio; but he began, in fact, by being witty and charming at parties in Dieppe where George Moore and the others could think of nothing more intelligent to do about Seurat's *Un dimanche d'été à la Grande Jatte* than to laugh at it, and where everyone thought that Renoir and Pissarro, who saw that the picture was the beginning of a modern classical renaissance, had gone mad; he began in fact by being out of the creative art movement of his generation in France and by hanging on to the coat-tails of an older generation.

Sickert continued in that posture till he was forty in 1900. In the 'nineties (while Gauguin was in Tahiti and Cézanne was painting *Portrait de Geffroy* and *Le lac d'Annecy*, and the Douanier Rousseau was painting *La Bohémienne endormie*, and Lautrec was drawing Yvette Guilbert and Aristide Bruant, and Maurice Denis was organizing himself and Bonnard and Vuillard into the Nabi movement, and, in London, Beardsley was producing original art) Sickert's painting was still not a link between anything contemporary in France and England, but only a link between two older masters; all through the 'nineties Sickert was still on Mondays Alunno di Whistler and on Tuesdays Amico di Degas. If he had died at forty we should have to judge him to-day by the dainty Whistlerian *pastiche*, *The Laundry* (1885), some Whistlerian presentations of the façade of St. Mark's, and pictures such as those reproduced here as Plates 1-15. And it would, I think, be difficult to maintain that in this group of pictures his talent had evolved 'that something new which justifies an artist for his existence'.

But the queer thing was that, though he was so unconscionably late in starting, though his early work was palpably derived, everyone who knew anything about these matters was always certain that as an artist he was what modern slang calls 'the goods all right'. Both Whistler and Degas held that opinion; the artists' society *Les XX* of Brussels (where Seurat and his colleagues all exhibited) invited him to contribute before he was thirty; the more adventurous of the English artists in the New English Art Club not only demanded his company but were ready to follow him if he would lead; when he was thirty-three and started his first art school, Roger Fry, Will Rothenstein and Alfred Thornton went to draw there; and a year later the compilers of the *Yellow Book* asked him for contributions as a matter of course. The explanation is best expressed by the old saw 'an artist is born not made'. Sickert was a born artist and everyone who could recognize an artist when he met one always knew

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it. The charm of his personality, his entertaining exhibitionism, his wit, his habit of leg-pulling (which gradually built up the Sickert Legend now enshrined to some extent in Dr. Emmons' book) were all there from the beginning and all had something to do with the foundation of this faith; but in addition and operating on a deeper level, there was the effect of the man's real essence, his artist's curiosity and open-mindedness and above all his artist's seriousness and reticence. It was by the things that Sickert did not say when he was talking brilliant nonsense more than by the things he did say that the conviction of his genuine quality was engendered in those who knew; and it was by what he avoided doing in his early pictures as much as by what he did in them that this conviction found support. In Sickert's pictures, before 1900, there is no trace of exhibitionism, irresponsibility, leg-pulling, seeking for applause—of all that he purged himself in his social contacts; in his work all was quiet and unaffected; there was nothing in it but the teachings of his masters and records of his own curiosity and perceptions set down with the humility of the exploring artist. Those sensitive to such things observed this; they observed too the artist's complete disregard for all popular demands; above all they observed that Sickert was what painters call 'a painter' i.e. a man delighting in his medium and gifted with sensibility in respect of form, texture, and the mysteries of 'good' colour. And thus those who knew and cared about these matters believed in Sickert all through this first relatively unadventurous period.

The circumstances in which Sickert left England at the end of the 'nineties are set down above by Miss Browse. They were sufficiently painful to make him feel that socially, at any rate, his luck was out; he had no longer the advantages of Whistler's friendship and he had to face prejudices caused by his divorce. But just as Pissarro, oppressed at this time by the anti-Semitism fomented by the Affaire Dreyfus, wrote '*toutes les tristesses, toutes les amertumes, toutes les douleurs, je les oublie et même je les ignore, dans la joie de travailler*', so Sickert, it may be, took refuge in the thought that he was after all an artist and one belonging to a brilliant generation, and, thrown now much more on his own resources, he made evident efforts to catch up with his contemporaries and explore beside them in their chosen fields.

We see the first results of these efforts in the work done in Dieppe, Paris, and above all in Venice during the next four years. Our frontispiece *La Giuseppina* was painted at this time in Venice. In one sense it is the kind of picture which Sickert might have been expected to paint in the 'eighties and which Lautrec was in fact painting before 1890 and which Bonnard was painting about 1895. It conforms in the first place to the old Impressionist doctrine that the subject should be presented, without arrangement, as it happened to appear (Degas told Sickert that he wanted his pictures to look as though he had painted them while peeping through a keyhole). As applied to portraiture this doctrine meant that you put in (or pretended to put in) behind the sitter's head whatever chanced to be there at the moment, (thus the head in Van Gogh's *Le père Tanguy* (1887) is surrounded by the Japanese prints sold in Tanguy's shop, and the head in Lautrec's *La fille à l'accroche-cœur* (1889) is flanked by the pic-

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tures in Lautrec's studio). So here in this picture the model's head is shown against a map of Venice which Sickert in Venice (1900-1903) had hung upon his bedroom wall. Then we must note that *La Giuseppina* conforms in the second place to the habit of imitating Japanese prints (which had begun in the 'sixties). In these prints the Japanese artists generally used the ground colour of the paper as their convention for flesh colour; this effect appears in Bonnard's *Femmes au Café* (1897) where the background and the face of the figure against it are both the same colour, and Sickert has followed the practice also in *La Giuseppina*; moreover he has increased the Japanese-print effect by exaggerating the mass of the girl's dark hair till it takes on the magnitude of a Japanese *coiffure*, and the red and green streaks on the map behind suggest those 'chop-stick' ornaments which habitually stick out from a Geisha's hair. Thus while Sickert in the 'eighties and 'nineties had appeared aware only of the older generation, he had somehow contrived, from the corner of his eye, to discover what his contemporaries, Van Gogh, Lautrec and Bonnard were about; and when he had made this, too, part of his equipment he cast it in the mould of his personal gifts and sensibilities which are superbly revealed in this picture. But *La Giuseppina* is not only evidence that Sickert had quietly studied the art of his own generation and that he had gifts of his own to display; it also shows that he had recently been studying the Venetian masters and especially Tintoretto. The low tone of the colour harmonies in Sickert's earlier pictures had been derived from Whistler; but in *La Giuseppina* there is a new colour richness animating the harmonies as it were from below the surface—a richness evidently inspired by Tintoretto's work in the Scuola di San Rocco where the colour sonorities are divined rather than perceived through the crepuscular mystery shed upon them by the dirt of four hundred years. No one in his senses would, of course, suggest any comparison of stature between Sickert and Tintoretto; but there is a relation—the same kind of relation that existed between Watteau and Rubens, the relation of the minor artist winning us by charm and yet recalling, in the one case, the thunder and, in the other, the bravura of a great creative force. In Venice, Sickert became deeply conscious of Tintoretto's use of colour (distinguished from colours) as an emotive force and thereafter he often himself used colour in that way; in *Resting* (Pl. 23) for example, lemon yellow, deep red and intermediate green-greys combine to a compelling chord which is really the subject of the picture.

By this time, moreover, Sickert was beginning to explore the fields now associated with Cézanne. He had discovered what Cézanne was about, I fancy, when he was in Paris in 1899-1900. For many pictures by Cézanne were then visible in Paris and there was much talk about him, especially among the Nabis of whom Bonnard and Vuillard (and doubtless others also) were Sickert's friends. Thus, in 1899, the dealer Vollard arranged a Second Cézanne Exhibition in his gallery (following the first of 1895); in 1899 also thirty pictures by Cézanne were exhibited in Paris in the Choquet sale, and other works by Cézanne were seen in the Salon des Indépendants in that year; Cézanne was also represented in the 1900 Exposition Universelle, and Maurice Denis, the Nabi, painted his *Hommage à Cézanne* (which included portraits of Bonnard

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and Vuillard) in 1900-1901. Sickert had the chance to study Cézanne's procedures at that time, just as Matisse had; and just as the fruits of Matisse's study are seen in his *Carmelina* (1901)—which I reproduce in my 'Modern French Painters' on the same page as Cézanne's *Geffroy* (1895)—so the fruits of Sickert's study would seem evident in *Mamma mia poveretta* (Pl. 20) and *The Beribboned Washstand* (Pl. 22) both painted in Venice in 1903.

The Cubist movement which was started five years later was largely influenced by Cézanne's dictum: '*Tout dans la nature se modèle selon la sphère, le cône et le cylindre; il faut s'apprendre à peindre sur ces figures simples, on pourra ensuite faire tout ce qu'on voudra.*' But Paris in 1899-1900 was not yet conscious of that facet of Cézanne's researches. At the time, when Sickert was there, what Paris saw in Cézanne's work was the facet corresponding to his other dictum: '*Peindre ce n'est pas copier seulement l'objectif; c'est saisir une harmonie entre des rapports nombreux.*' And it was indeed the establishment of a harmony in formal relations that Sickert was after in these works. For whereas in *La Giuseppina* he had followed Impressionist doctrines when he included the map in the background, in *Mamma mia poveretta* and *The Beribboned Washstand* the curtain above the washstand is not included as an illustrative accessory to suggest actuality on the Impressionist principle, it is the very jumping-off point, the initial formal factor of the whole picture in each case; and the artist's chief concern was to marry this form to other formal factors in the picture. Thus Sickert here appears as a modern post-Cézanne artist working on the assumption that the beauty of art is not the beauty of the individual objects represented but some beauty of formal relations determined by the artist. To an extent, of course, he had always painted on this assumption and he continued to do so all his life; but I see more concentration within this attitude in these two pictures, and others like them in this period, than in any of his works till we reach the second half of the Camden Town period.

For when Sickert returned to England in 1905 he entered a new phase of his development that lasted for five years. Highly sensitive to ambiance, it was inevitable that Venetian colour-sonority should have influenced him in Venice and that, living abroad for six years, he should have absorbed many characters of the central continental effort inspired from Paris. It was also inevitable that, back in London, he would be affected by his environment. Here he found himself once more surrounded by the English preference for descriptive naturalistic painting and by the pervading English demand that a picture should have a subject other than its form. His obvious course was to join the non-academic English artists and uphold the continental standard in their midst. But he was never happy in the obvious course; an imp of perversity was always there impelling him to make the unexpected gesture; when Gore, Gilman and others of the Fitzroy Street coterie expected him to parade the latest things from Paris, he began to pose to them as an essentially English artist and a rather old-fashioned one at that—an artist in the tradition of the portrait painters who put artificial outdoor landscapes behind their sitters' heads, an artist in the tradition of Hogarth, who painted scenes of low-life as moral comedies and who went to a prison



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to paint the murderess Sarah Malcolm on the day before she was hanged. And thus it came that one of the first pictures he painted in this period was the portrait called *Lady in a gondola* (Pl. 24) which has a Venetian background as much 'made up' as any outdoor background by Reynolds, Gainsborough or Raeburn, and that he followed this by the famous series of low-life indoor pictures to which he gave Hogarthian titles (though actually he cared so little for the titles that he called one picture *The Camden Town Murder* and changed the title at the private view of his exhibition to *What shall we do for the Rent?*).

It is important to remember this situation when we study Sickert's work in the first half of the Camden Town period. We must not take too seriously his pose as a modern Hogarth or a Charles Keene using oils. We must leave the concept of him as a whimsical social philosopher recording low life in cockney slums to the Sickert Legend where it belongs. Instead we must stare at his pictures and then we shall see that, though he paid lip service to local standards, he did in fact fulfil his obvious mission and reveal to the English what certain creative types of recent continental painting were about. Cézanne, it is true, he put back into the cupboard in these years; but he let out what he had learned from his friends Bonnard and Vuillard and what he knew of Matisse (with whose nudes of 1900 to 1902 he was assuredly in some way acquainted), and what he knew of Lautrec, and also what he knew of certain Germans whose paintings he may have seen in Munich or Venice or reproduced in German magazines.

Take for example the *Nude at a Mirror* (Pl. 25) which he painted about 1907. The prevailing tone here is very low—the tone of the grimy Tintoretto panels in the Scuola di San Rocco; the flesh is deep cream with umber, green, and purple modulations; the background is deep olive green with purple notes; the paint is applied with broad square brush strokes which do not follow the forms depicted but move across them—a variant of Seurat's touch borrowed, perhaps, from Trübner or Leo Putz or some other member of the Munich group 'Die Scholle' whose pictures, painted in this manner, were reproduced by 'Jugend' in colour in 1907. There is in fact nothing English in this picture. It would be impossible to find a series of English pictures (excepting those painted later and influenced by it) where it would appear at home. But it takes its place naturally in a series with Lautrec's *Femme nue devant sa glace* (1897) and Matisse's *Carmelina* (1901) on the one hand, and Bonnard's *La glace haute* (1911) on the other. Matisse's picture shows a nude girl seated on a table with her back reflecting in a mirror; Lautrec's and Bonnard's, like Sickert's show the back of a nude woman standing and looking in a full length mirror where her face and figure are reflected. All four pictures are partly what the French call *académies*, i.e. studies of the nude as such. But both Lautrec and Bonnard have inserted some illustrative accessories conveying social comment. In Lautrec's picture there is a tousled bed in the background and it is made clear that the slut's outdoor clothes, sprawling over a chair in the foreground, have but lately been put off. In Bonnard's picture a *gentille petite femme* is portrayed in more salubrious surroundings; the mirror

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tells us that she has just emerged from a modern enamel bath in a bathroom with tiled floor, and elsewhere we learn that, refreshed and perfumed, she is about to step into frilly petticoats and skirt. Lautrec's composition is based on the Degas-Impressionist peep-through-the-keyhole doctrine; Bonnard's is a frank imitation of Vermeer's *The Love Letter* where the lady and her maid, generally presumed to be seen through a door-way, are really reflected in a mirror. Matisse and Sickert have both been more austere; both have declined all adventitious aids to interest in their pictures. In *Carmelina* the nude girl is obviously a studio model posed in a studio for the sole and evident purpose of providing Matisse with material for an experimental composition in depth in the manner of Cézanne's *Geffroy*. In Sickert's *Nude at a Mirror* there is not even this degree of description; his nude woman may be any kind of young woman standing before a mirror in any kind of apartment in that twilight hour when specific forms lose more and more their outlines, and local colours drain away. For the real subject of Sickert's picture is the visual poetry of that hour; with Cézanne in the cupboard and Bonnard, Matisse, Lautrec and Putz on the table of his London studio he has once more recorded that moment of twilight which Whistler had taught him to enjoy; and while he was doing it he doubtless told his cronies that he was emulating the bright illustrative performances of Frith or the healthy animalism of Etty.

In the case of the equally low-toned *The Mantelpiece* (Pl. 27) no verbal quips could conceal the return to the Whistler influence. The composition itself revealed it to all familiar with Whistler's *Self portrait with Blue China* and *White Girl by the Mirror*. But there was more to it than that. For Sickert here has drawn again on knowledge acquired in his continental years. The muted sonority of the Scuola di San Rocco is here again as an emotive quality so greatly enriching the picture's content that it makes Whistler's painting look lady-like and slight; and, borrowing this time from Vuillard, Sickert has so deliberately balanced and dispersed the tonal and colour accents all over the canvas that the aesthetic effect is closer to an Eastern rug or carpet than to a twilight harmony by Whistler, or Hogarth's rendering of figures by a mantelpiece in *Marriage à la Mode*, Scene 2. It is to Vuillard also that we owe the all-over aesthetic animation of the pigment in the absolutely first-rate painting *The New Bedford* (Pl. 26) where every inch is as richly varied in tone, quality and colour as the gold and silver trimming on the Queen's dress in Goya's *Family of Charles IV* in Madrid.

On the picture called *The Camden Town Murder* or *What shall we do for the Rent?* (Pl. 28) there are plentiful accretions from the Sickert Legend. The picture was painted in Camden Town during or after the trial for murder of the young glass painter Robert Wood, friend of the harlot Phyllis Dimmock who lived in Camden Town and was found naked and strangled on her bed; at the trial there was much talk of local public houses called 'The Eagle' and 'The Rising Sun'; and the accused made caricature sketches in court of the witnesses against him. Here indeed was rich material for the Legend—for English legend makers find 'pubs' as romantic as French legend makers find cafés—and it was grand to have a highbrow English artist thus illustrating

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a local cockney tragedy in which a low-brow artist accused of murder was acquitted. But no tittle of these accretions can be observed in the work itself; for that was just a technical experiment by Sickert who thought it would be fun to take Manet's *Olympia* and paint it the other way round.

Similar accretions with much talk of Mornington Crescent and Granby Street have been deposited by the Legend on numerous pictures with nude figures on iron bedsteads which Sickert painted in these years (Pls. 32, 33, 35). But here again there is nothing in the actual pictures to warrant the Legend's gifts. In painting these pictures Sickert was no more recording life in Camden Town than he was recording life in Chinatown. He let his North London cronies think that the locality had something to do with it. But in fact when he was painting, his mind was not in North London but in North Paris, not in Mornington Crescent but on the Boulevard du Clichy. He continued to talk to his Camden Town friends about Hogarth, Rowlandson and Keene, but the artists who were really on his table when he painted these pictures were Lautrec and Lautrec's own source of inspiration—Degas. For the iron bedsteads and the dressing table were here the equivalents of the bath tub and sponge which Degas kept in his studio; and the *contre-jour* effect of *Mornington Crescent Nude* (Pl. 33) came from Degas' *Woman at a Window* of 1874. Indeed in these pictures Sickert was even less a local illustrator than Lautrec was when he painted *Au lit* in 1892 or than Degas was when he painted his models pretending to be taking baths. For whereas Degas had been intent on recording occupational gestures and attitudes, and Lautrec had been intent on recording the individual characters of the Montmartre *pierreuses* romanticized by Aristide Bruant, Sickert was wholly concerned here, as in *Nude at a Mirror* (Pl. 25) with the aesthetic problem of recording in pigment his Whistlerian pleasure in muted colour and effects of fading light.

The first half of the Camden Town period ran from the middle of 1905 to the autumn of 1910; and I must make two more observations before passing to the second. The first is that Sickert, in spite of everything, did suffer in one respect from his London environment in these years. For he was led thereby to paint some unadventurous portraits and a number of loosely descriptive semi-portrait heads of little more interest than the hundreds of such things which London artists habitually produce on mornings when they are hard put to it to answer the question: 'What on earth shall I paint today?' The second is that, while he was making the contributions I have tried to analyse, there were tremendous creative happenings in France; Cézanne in 1905 was finishing *Les grandes baigneuses*, Renoir was painting *Ode aux fleurs d'Anacréon*, *La danseuse aux castagnettes* and *Midi* landscapes, Picasso painted all his 'Blue' and 'Pink' pictures (1904-5), his Negro pictures (1906-7) and his first Cubist pictures (1907-10), Matisse and Rouault were leading the Fauve movement, and the Douanier Rousseau painted *Le lion ayant faim* and *La Muse inspirant le poète*.

During the second half of the Camden Town period the relations between Sickert and his environment were changed. The change was caused in the first place by the

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First London Post-Impressionist Exhibition which took place in the winter of 1910-1911. Most English artists at that time knew something of the French Impressionists because the Durand-Ruel Impressionist Exhibition in London in 1905 had contained nineteen works by Manet, fifty-nine by Renoir, forty by Pissarro and a number by Sisley, Berthe Morisot and Boudin; they had even had a chance to get to know Cézanne's early manner because ten of his pictures (mostly painted in the 'seventies) were included in that show. But of Cézanne's later work and Post-Impressionism and the contemporary French painting I have referred to in the last paragraph they knew for the most part almost nothing. In respect of the last named this First Post-Impressionist Exhibition did not help them; there were no signs there of Picasso and the Cubists or the Douanier Rousseau. But it did show them twenty-one pictures by Cézanne, forty-one by Gauguin, twenty-two by Van Gogh and five by Signac; Seurat unfortunately was only represented by two port scenes; there were some works by the Nabis, including Maurice Denis, and Fauve pictures by Rouault and Matisse. The effect on the English artists was overwhelming. All had to take sides for or against the tremendous creative forces here revealed. No one could remain indifferent. In Sickert's Camden Town circle the artists were intrigued by Gauguin and completely captured by Van Gogh; they were also delighted by the bright colours in Signac's pictures; and sober practitioners like Gilman rushed off to buy large tubes of cadmium, viridian, vermilion and antwerp blue which they resolved to use at their full strength.

This placed Sickert in a rather strange position. For he of course had known Gauguin's work for many years (had not his friend Degas bought Gauguin's *La belle Angèle* in 1891?) and he had probably seen the Gauguin Memorial Exhibition at the Salon d'Automne in 1903, and as the painter of *Woman at a Mirror* (Pl. 25) he could not fail to enjoy the sonorous but muted colour of Gauguin's *L'esprit veille* which was included in the London show. But the whole corpus of his work to this moment tells us that he had no kind of sympathy with the romantic exoticism which had driven Gauguin to Tahiti and inspired his paintings and his writings. When Renoir heard that Gauguin had gone to Tahiti he smiled and said, '*Pourquoi? On peint si bien aux Batignolles;*' and the same comment would surely have been made by Sickert. With Van Gogh's painting he was doubtless also familiar (he had probably seen the large Van Gogh Exhibition at his own French dealer Bernheim Jeune's Gallery in 1901—the show which had really inspired the whole Fauve movement in Paris); he understood Van Gogh's work but he could only admire it with reservations; he recognized that Van Gogh had done something terrific but he detested his handling of paint and his aesthetic. He was therefore much distressed that his friends and disciples should be bowled over by this man. Gauguin as a tone painter and a grave designer in the grand manner they might safely follow (as long as they did not follow him to Tahiti or Timbuctoo) but about Van Gogh he felt he had to write at this moment: 'I have always disliked Van Gogh's execution most cordially. I execrate his treatment of the instrument I love, those strips of metallic paint that catch the light like so many dyed

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straws; and when those strips make convolutions that follow the form of ploughed furrows in a field my teeth are set on edge. . . .'<sup>1</sup>

The warning, however, was quite disregarded by the Camden Town artists; and Wyndham Lewis has summed up the situation by describing his visits to Gilman's studio in the period that followed this show: 'If you went into Gilman's room you would see postcards of Van Gogh's paintings. When he felt very pleased with a painting he had done he would hang it in the neighbourhood of a photograph of a painting by Van Gogh. After his break of what was more or less discipleship with Walter Sickert and his plunge into the Signac palette and a brighter scheme of things . . . bitumen was anathema to him and Sickert was bitumen. . . . He would look over in the direction of Sickert's studio and a slight shudder would convulse him as he thought of the little brown worm of paint that was possibly, even at that moment, wriggling out on to the palette. . . .'<sup>2</sup>

Other disturbing factors also appeared in this period 1910-1914. The new delight in riotous colour, engendered by the First Post-Impressionist Exhibition, was increased by Bakst's décors in the first appearances of Diaghileff's Russian Ballet, and then came the Second Post-Impressionist Exhibition (1912) containing more landscapes by Cézanne, Matisse's *Les poissons rouges*, *Les capucines* and *La danse*, examples of Picasso's 'Pink' and Cubist periods and Derain's best picture, *La fenêtre sur le parc*. The Italian Futurists roused further animation. Wyndham Lewis launched an English Cubist movement (with a dash of Futurism). And the young philosopher Hulme, on Friday evenings in Frith Street, talked to the new Cubist sculptor, Jacob Epstein, about 'the change of sensibility which has enabled us to appreciate Egyptian, Indian, Byzantine, Polynesian and Negro work as art and not as archæology or ethnology' and expounded Sorel's Fascism to the staff of the *New Age*.

With all this happening Sickert had to pause and think. He was just over fifty—the critical age for an artist when he has to choose between the easy path of repeating past successes while proclaiming to himself and others that creative art has ceased, and the hard path of fresh creative effort which alone can postpone decay. Hitherto he had discreetly revealed to London some aspects of the great continental renaissance; Camden Town and Bloomsbury had glimpsed this renaissance darkly through a Sickertian screen. Now all was different. The boys were behind the screen. He knew that he still held the respect of all the generations, not excluding the youngest—*ipso facto* the most critical and cruel. But if he became an Old Fogey he would surely lose it. What was he to do?

In this dilemma what he did was this: he went to the cupboard and let out Cézanne, whom he had kept locked up there since he painted *Mamma mia poveretta* and *The Beribboned Washstand* in Venice. He walked bang into the truculent group which was running the *New Age* and gave them a set of admirable drawings made to demonstrate what Cézanne meant by composition when he composed the *Mardi Gras* and the several

<sup>1</sup>Fortnightly Review: January, 1911. (Quoted in Emmons, *op. cit.*).

<sup>2</sup>Lewis and Fergusson: *Harold Gilman* (Chatto & Windus).

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versions of *Les joueurs de cartes*, and he followed those drawings with paintings of the same character (Pls. 40 and 42). The imp of perversity was called on for the titles: *Preoccupation* (changeable to 'What do my gold shares stand at to-day?'), *Sunday Afternoon* (or if you prefer it, 'My word, those onions don't 'arf repeat') and *Ennui* (which can be altered in the Tate Gallery version to 'The North West Passage up-to-date'). At the same time quietly, and by stages, he began to lighten the general tonality of his painting, to break his colour less completely on his palette and to let sunlight illumine the room in Granby Street (Pl. 41) and cast purple shadows in a landscape *La Scierie de Tocqueville* (Pl. 38). At the end of this period he went still further. In the large picture *The Soldiers of King Albert the Ready* (Pl. 43) painted in 1914, he told those who knew their Cubism that his own selection from the Cubist camp was Roger de la Fresnaye (then quite unknown in England) who had exhibited his *L'artillerie* in the Salon des Indépendants in 1912 and attempted therein (as in his other pictures) to hedonise Cubist austerity and give it an Old Master flavour by the admission of luxury colour and textural beauties in the quality of the paint. Thus Sickert routed the first temptations of Old Fogeydom, and the younger men, when he pulled their legs and pretended to be hostile to the 'moderns', had to take off their hats to him and acknowledge that he still knew more than they did about the things they most wanted to know.

In the war years, which followed, Sickert continued to lighten his palette; the areas of relatively flat tones and colour—which distinguish *The Soldiers of King Albert the Ready* and the Tate Gallery version of *Ennui* from such earlier pictures as *The New Bedford* (Pl. 26)—reappear in *The Brighton Pierrots* (1915) where a luxury pink, reminiscent of the pink in Gauguin's Marquesan pictures, is the dominant in the colour chord; and there are light greens and purples in the Impressionist landscapes painted at Bath (Pls. 47-50). But he seems to have made no major creative efforts in these years. Conditions, it may be, were against it. As a man approaching sixty he was rather 'out of it all' in that time of peril. He lacked the spur of the younger men's competition; Paul Nash, Lewis, Wadsworth, Roberts, Stanley Spencer, Eric Kennington and others were out of England fighting in the war; and when after the Armistice, their brilliant and original war pictures (which owed so much to Cubist discipline) were exhibited, he himself was abroad in Dieppe and distracted, as Miss Browse has related, by the death of his second wife. It is therefore not surprising that we see a degree of what the psychologists call 'perseveration' in his pictures painted from 1919 to 1922. This does not mean that he merely repeated himself in this period. Rather it means that he had now reached a stage when he could easily vary and intensify a number of tunes and themes; *Christine buys a Gendarmerie* (Pl. 51) is built with themes already used for *The Acting Manager* (Pl. 1) and *Miss Beerbohm* (Pl. 8); *The Trapeze* (Pl. 53), it is true, is no more than a record of something seen which recalled to him Degas's *Miss Lola*, but *Vernets, Dieppe* (Pl. 52) is the Degas-inspired *Gatti's Hungerford Palace* (Pl. 3) enriched with elements absorbed not only from Cézanne but also, for once, from Van Gogh; and the excellent *Baccarat: The*

## SICKERT'S ART

*Fur Cape* (Pl. 54) takes its place naturally with his earlier explorations in Cézanne's field—*Mamma mia poveretta* (Pl. 20), *The Beribboned Washstand* (Pl. 22) and the *New Age* drawings with the related paintings of 1911-1914. Then for a moment he really fell into a ditch. In 1923-1924, as we know from Mr. Stephenson, there was a serious sag in his morale; depressed and lonely, he seems truly to have felt that Old Fogeydom and a seat in Burlington House must be accepted. But when the Academy had elected him, he at once reacted by girding his loins to complete the cardinal picture *Rue Aguado* (Victor Lecour) (Pl. 58) just as he had reacted in his Venice period after the collapse of his morale in 1899-1900. Perhaps, too, he was partly moved to this reaction by turning the pages of the *New Age* and finding there what he himself had written ten years earlier: 'The sympathetic personality of the man who is standing talking, saying almost anything . . . has become transfigured by the light . . . For the moment his mood, his pose and the lighting conspire to make of his image the quint-essential embodiment of life. . . . The man, standing with a cheroot in one hand . . . has got to be drawn. *He has got to be drawn*. He has got to be drawn before the fizziness of his momentary mood has become still and flat. If the painter is tactful and behaves to the man as if the man were a sparrow, if the painter can throw his crumb of appreciation and his monosyllabic assent quietly enough not to frighten the model, and yet sharply enough to keep him alert, I give him twenty-five minutes. . . .' At any rate he had made just such a drawing of Victor Lecour that 'superb great creature like a bear' in his room at Dieppe before he left. He now took up the canvas begun from it and finished an Impressionist masterpiece which Degas himself, the master peeper-through-the-keyhole, would have been proud and delighted to sign.<sup>1</sup>

There was life, it was evident, in the old dog yet. If the Academy thought that the crusted port from their far-famed cellars would make a crusted painter of Sickert here at the outset they were undeceived. And there were more shocks to come. For Sickert developed in the next five years in new and very startling ways. Indeed, sensitive as he was to ambiance, he could hardly fail to be fired, sooner or later, by the Idealist Twenties—a period of high enthusiasms, exploring energy, creative power and commonsense in all aspects of international endeavour, a period which accomplished so much before the Nazi-Fascist propagandists, for their own ends, launched their wide campaign in the 'thirties to discredit its aims and belittle its achievements. In the arts, by 1925, the modern renaissance in architecture and the applied arts, known as Purism, Functionalism and *le style mécanique* and launched by Ozenfant and Jeanneret (Le Corbusier) in France, had begun to capture all the most intelligent young English architects and artists by its clean-cut aesthetic, the charm of its glittering glass and metal and its practical use of twentieth century resources. Sickert was too old to lead the English forces in this new crusade against the enormous interests vested in Ye Olde this and that; but the action of this crusade around him was a stimulus; hearing the battle cry of the crusaders, 'Architecture is the Mother of the Arts', he began to re-examine the luxury-easel-picture concepts which

<sup>1</sup> The passage from the 'New Age' is quoted in *extenso* in Emmons, *op. cit.* pp. 303-6.

## SICKERT'S ART

... he had accepted hitherto and to transform his art of easel-painting into mural decoration. Hence the large decorative theatrical portraits of this period such as *Sir Nigel Playfair in 'She Stoops to Conquer'* (Pl. 63); hence the large decorative panel *The Raising of Lazarus* (Pl. 62) the first version of which was actually painted on the red-papered wall of his studio; and hence also the 'Echoes' where he took compositions from old black and white prints and concerned himself wholly with the invention of decorative tone and colour patterning suitable for enlargement to a mural scale. In *The Raising of Lazarus* he called up again his memories of Venetian mural painting, and the colour here—deep wine red, metallic green and silver—is again inspired by Tintoretto. But this rich colour harmony and this source of inspiration are both exceptions in these later decorative pictures (though Tintoretto was called on again for certain of the *Echoes* such as *Brougham*). In general the tints are light and gay as in *Sir Nigel Playfair in 'She Stoops to Conquer'* where the colour scheme is made with puce in the coat, a lemon yellow waistcoat and buff breeches seen against some cardboard green-grey shrubbery and a light back-cloth landscape. In the 'Echoes' the colours are also for the most part light, and our plate *Sirens Aboard* shows a characteristic scheme.

Those acquainted with the works of Maurice Denis, the mural painter of the Nabi Group, will realise that Sickert in these later decorative pictures, notably the 'Echoes', was releasing yet another continental figure from his cupboard, a figure from the generation of Bonnard and Vuillard, the generation which followed his own. And thus at seventy he was not only abreast of his generation but beyond it. At seventy he had still escaped Old Fogeydom and he still had something to tell the English youngsters about Parisian art. It was accordingly with a quite clear conscience that he now encouraged a new aspect of the Sickert Legend by posing as the champion of the official art world in scores of letters to the papers (one of which, I remember, was signed 'Rd. Sickert, P.R.B.A., A.R.A., A.R.P.E., L.G., Me. de la Société des Artistes Indépendants'), and poking public fun at Bloomsbury's Cézanne-worshippers ('licensed', as he put it, 'by Roger Fry to practise as Post-Impressionists,') while privately he helped them with kindness and a wink. It was with a clear conscience also that in the 'thirties he painted so many pictures of himself as a tired old man pottering about his homestead and that, in this renewal of creative effort, he wittily inscribed on *The Front at Hove* (Pl. 64) '*Turpe senex miles, turpe senilis amor*'.

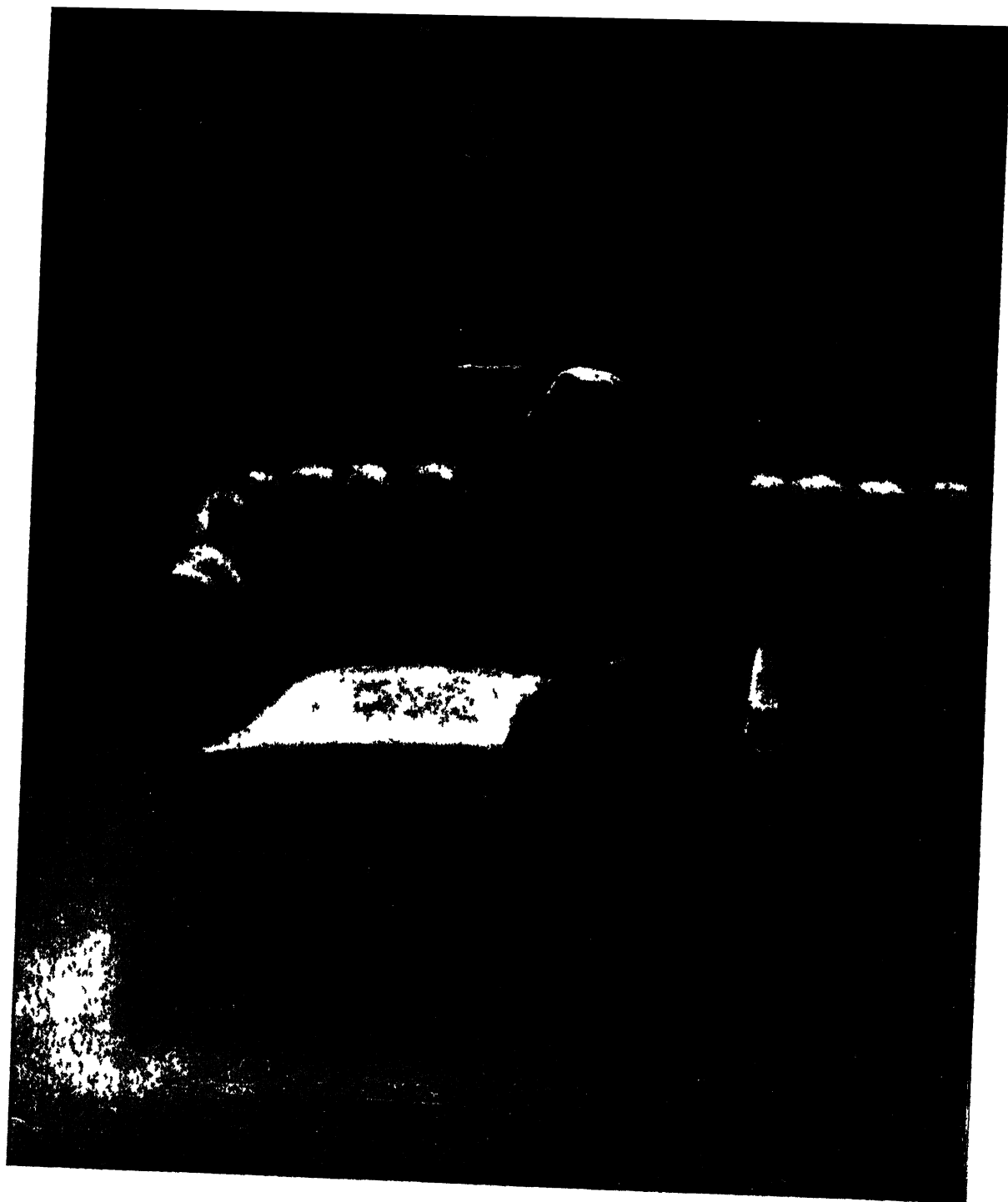
The question I posed at the outset has now, I fancy, almost answered itself. But there is one more aspect of his procedures which I must refer to before I close. Except in his early years he rarely painted from nature. His habit was to paint from drawings or photographs or prints. In some cases he used other people's photographs, in others he took the photographs himself or had them taken for his purpose. In his later years he used photographs especially for his portraits and he advertised this by letters to the papers and by inscribing on his double portrait *King George V talking to Major Fetherstonhaugh at the Grand National 1927* 'By courtesy of Topical Press' (the copyright owners of the photographs used). It is important to realize that in Sickert's hands the procedure was the same whether he used drawings, photographs



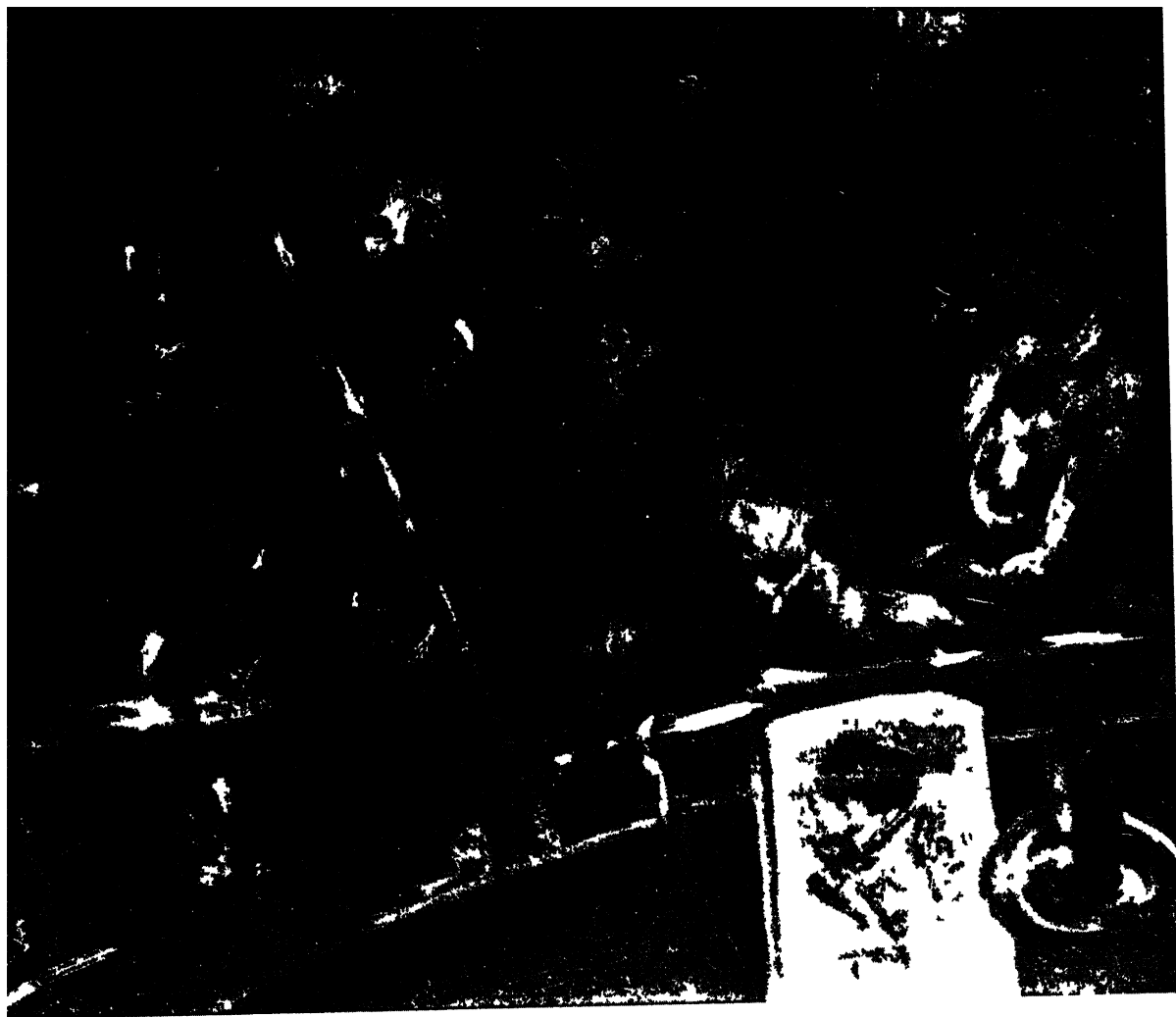
## SICKERT'S ART

or prints. It was a procedure based on a reaction against the Impressionist and Naturalistic doctrines insisting that everything in a picture must be painted 'from nature', the same reaction which lay at the base of his contemporary Seurat's return to the ideal of the classical composition, and which lay also at the base of the Cubist movement as a whole. Sickert knew that the Renaissance artists painted from drawings and he believed that they would surely have used photographs also if they had been available; he knew that Degas had used photographs and that Manet had taken the composition of his *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* from a Renaissance print; and he knew that he was in line both with classical tradition and with the modern movement when he assumed that the painter's chief concern is not with the objects depicted or the preliminary stages of a picture but with the actual harmony achieved by the painter in the picture itself. In all his paintings he began where the drawing, the print or the photograph left off. As a painter, in his view, his business was with paint.

Did Sickert 'evolve that something new which justifies an artist for his existence?' The answer is, I think, that after 1900 he did this in one form or another almost continuously to the end—and most notably in the pictures which I have discussed at length. Among his most personal productions my own favourites include *La Giuseppina* (Frontispiece), *Resting* (Pl. 23), *The New Bedford* (Pl. 26) and many of the 'Echoes'. If Sickert had remained on the stage our experience would surely be poorer by the qualities he gave to these and analogous works. It is indeed good fortune that he left the stage at twenty and thereafter acted only to amuse himself and mystify his friends.



1. THE ACTING MANAGER : *circa 1884*



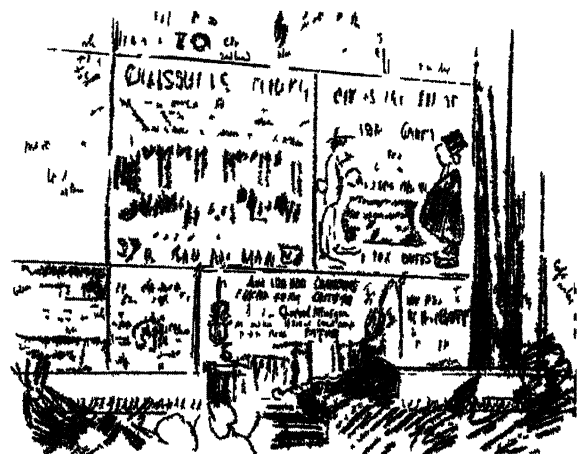
2 THE OLD MIDDLESEX *circa 1887*

2a. THE MOGUL TAVERN, DRURY LANE 1908



3 GATTI'S HUNGERFORD PALACE OF VARIETIES,  
SECOND TURN OF KATIE LAWRENCE circa 1855

3a THE SAFETY CURTAIN circa 1900 05





4 THE OLD BEDFORD *circa 1890*

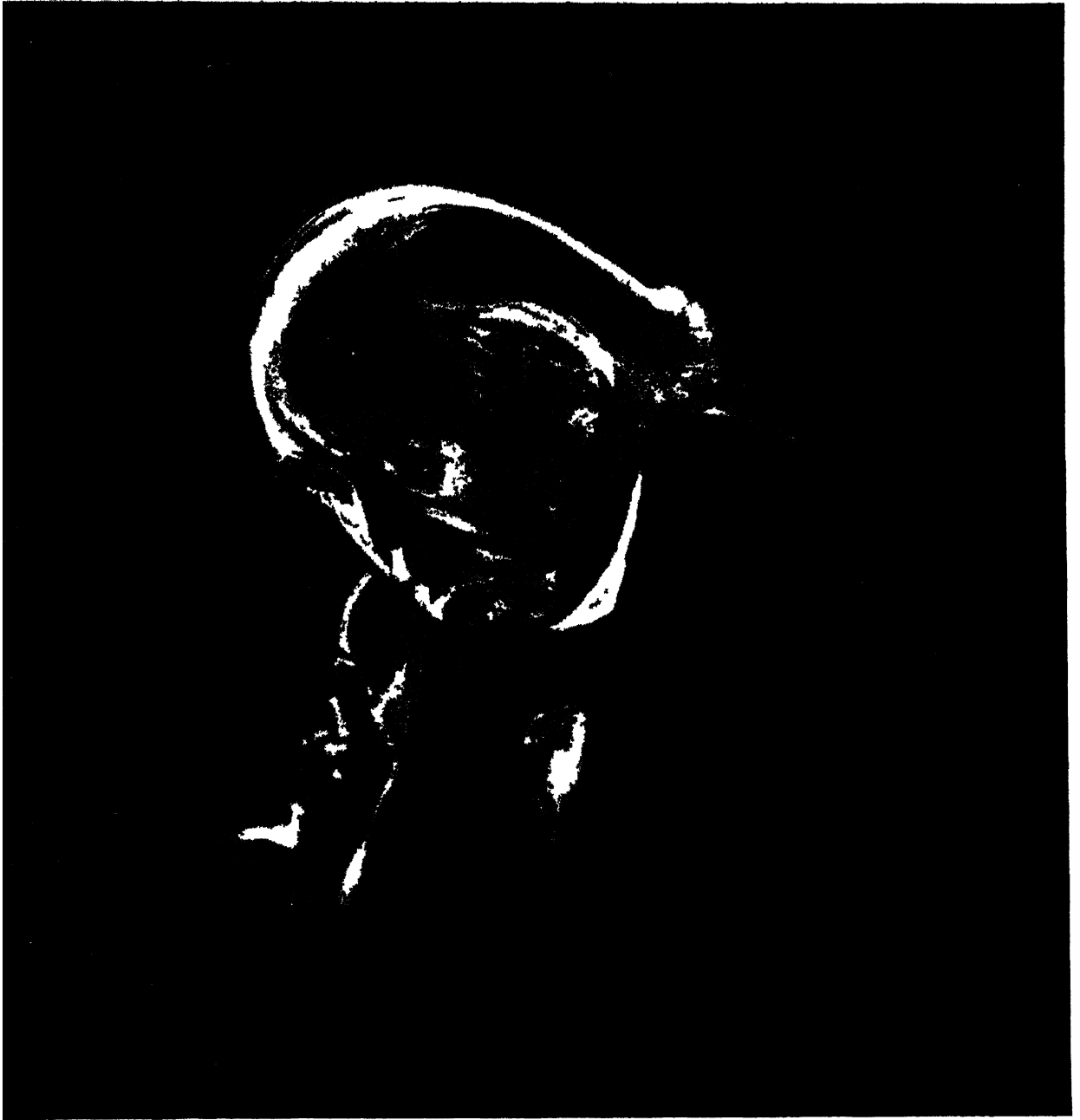
4a 'THE LONDON' AT SHOREDITCH 1920



5 THE OLD BEDFORD *circa 1890*

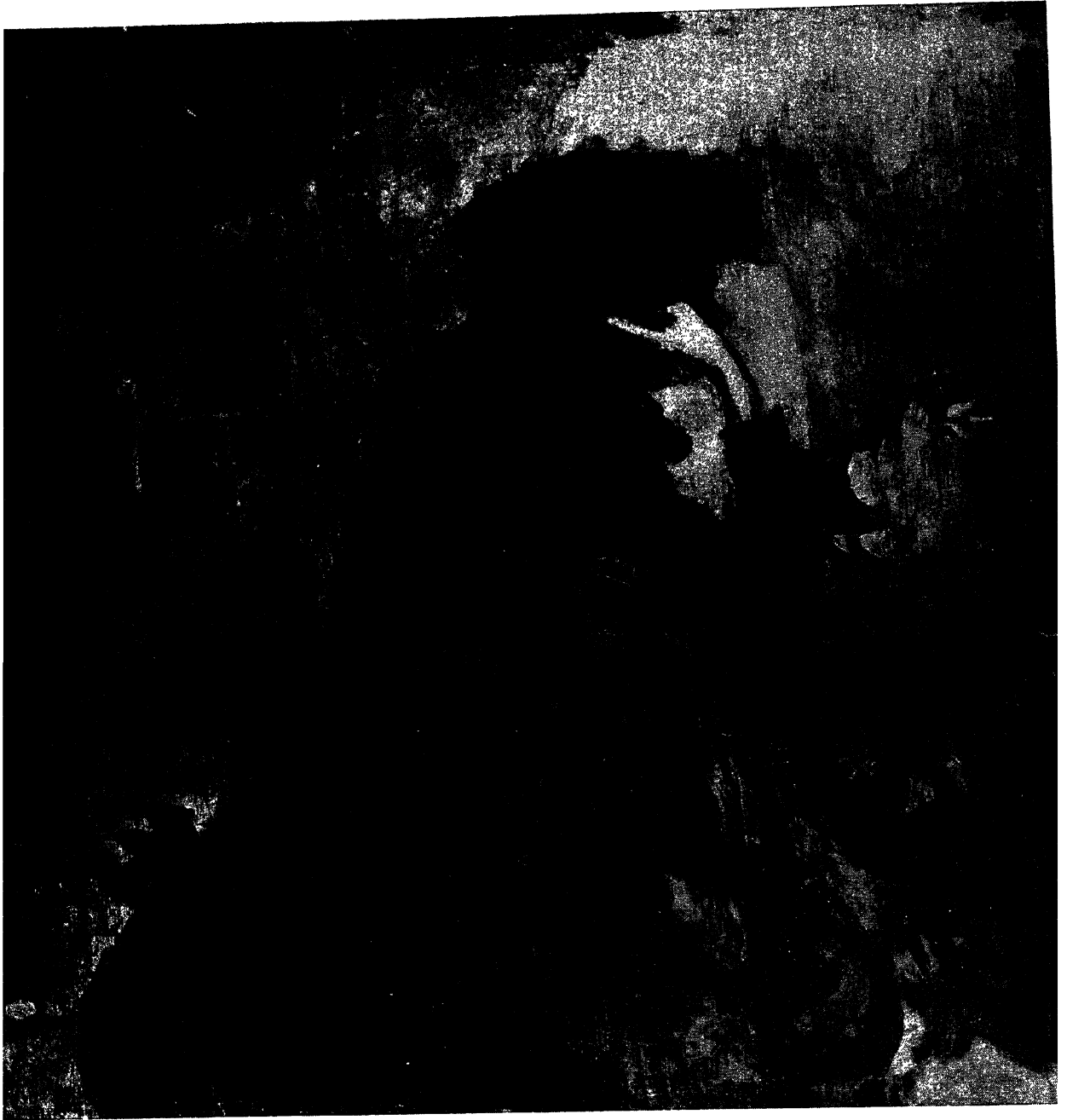


6 P WILSON STEER 1890

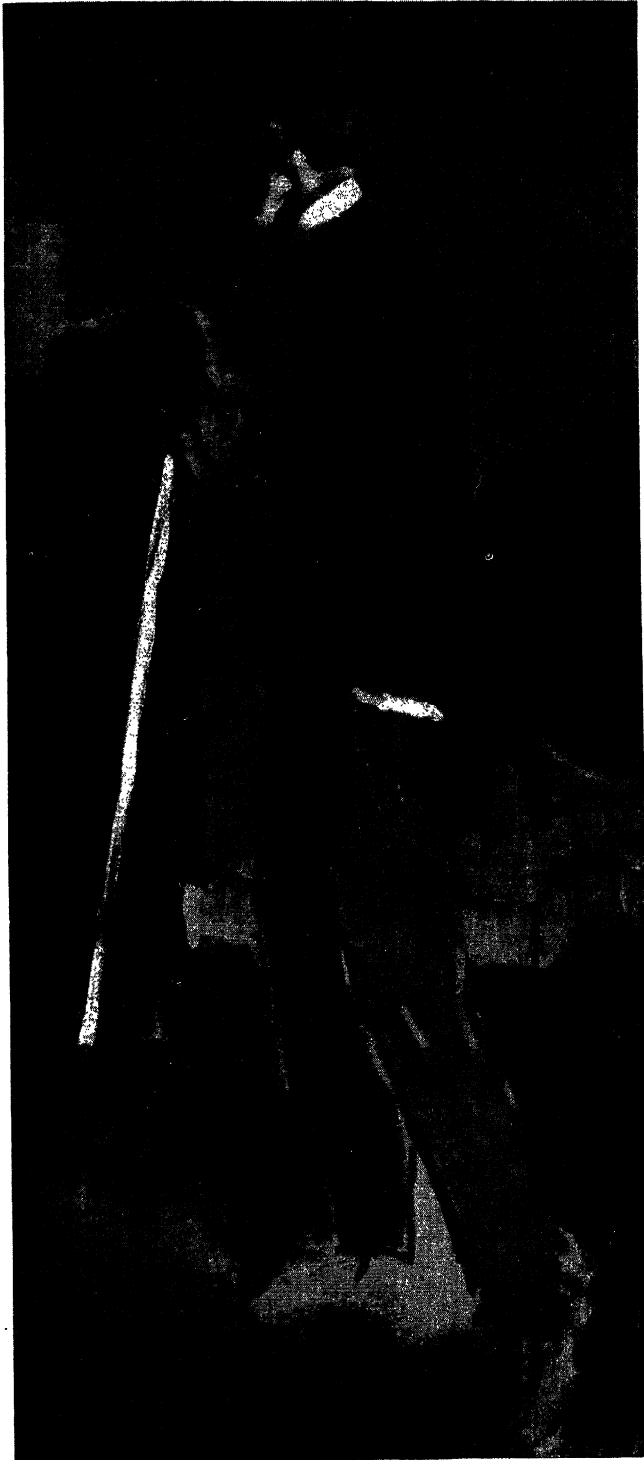


7 CHARLES BRADLAUGH : *circa 1890*



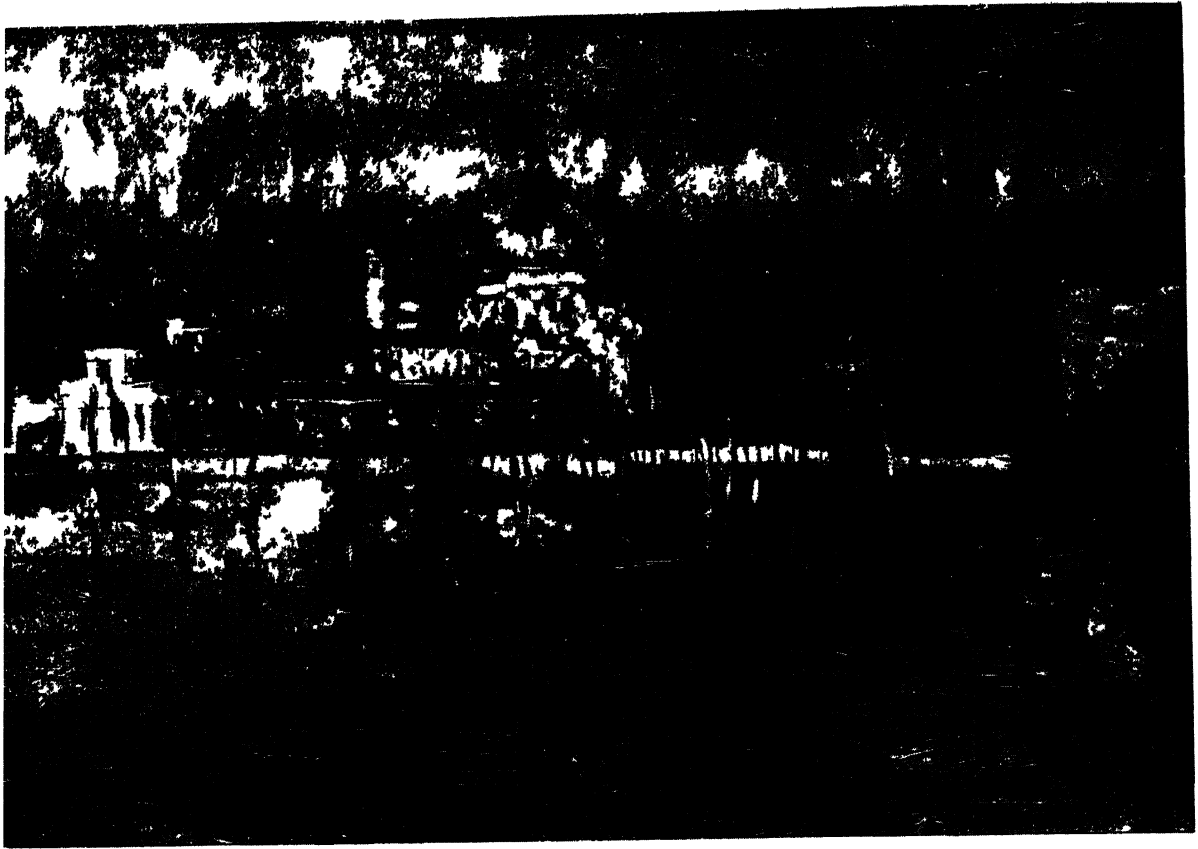


8. MISS BEERBOHM. 1894



9. AUBREY BEARDSLEY. 1894

9a. (above) AUBREY BEARDSLEY : circa 1895



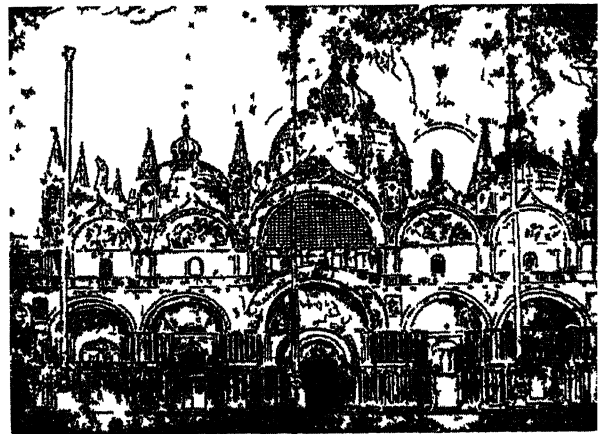
10 THE DOGANA AND THE SANTA  
MARIA DELLA SALUTE 1896

10a THE RIALTO 1896



11 VENICE CHURCH 1896

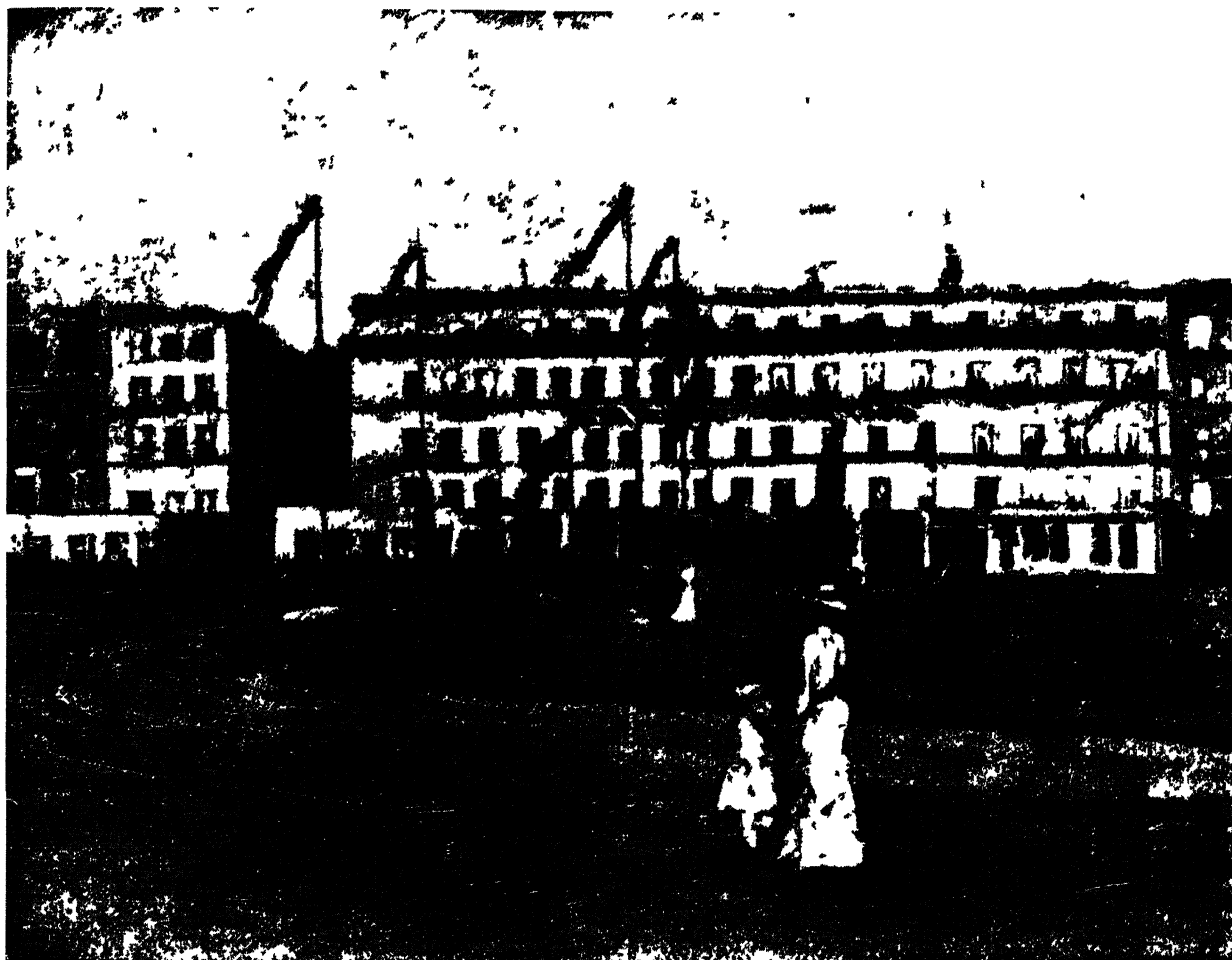
11a ST MARK'S 1896





12. CAFE DES TRIBUNAUX,  
DIEPPE *circa 1900*

12a. 'THEY ALSO SERVE . . .'  
*circa 1920*



13. THE OLD HOTEL ROYAL,  
DIEPPE *circa 1900*



13a. THE OLD HOTEL ROYAL,  
DIEPPE: *circa 1905*

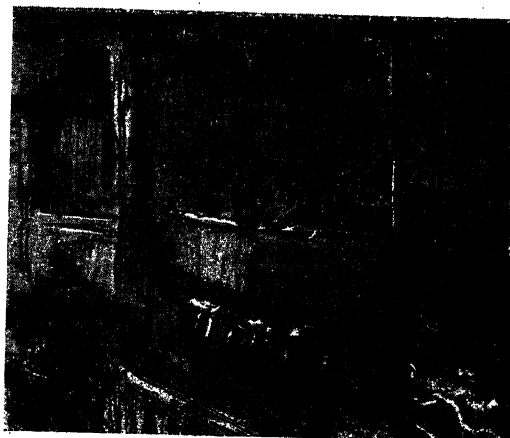


THE HAUNTED HOUSE, DIEPPE : *circa 1900*



15. THÉÂTRE DE MONTMARTRE, PARIS: *circa 1900*

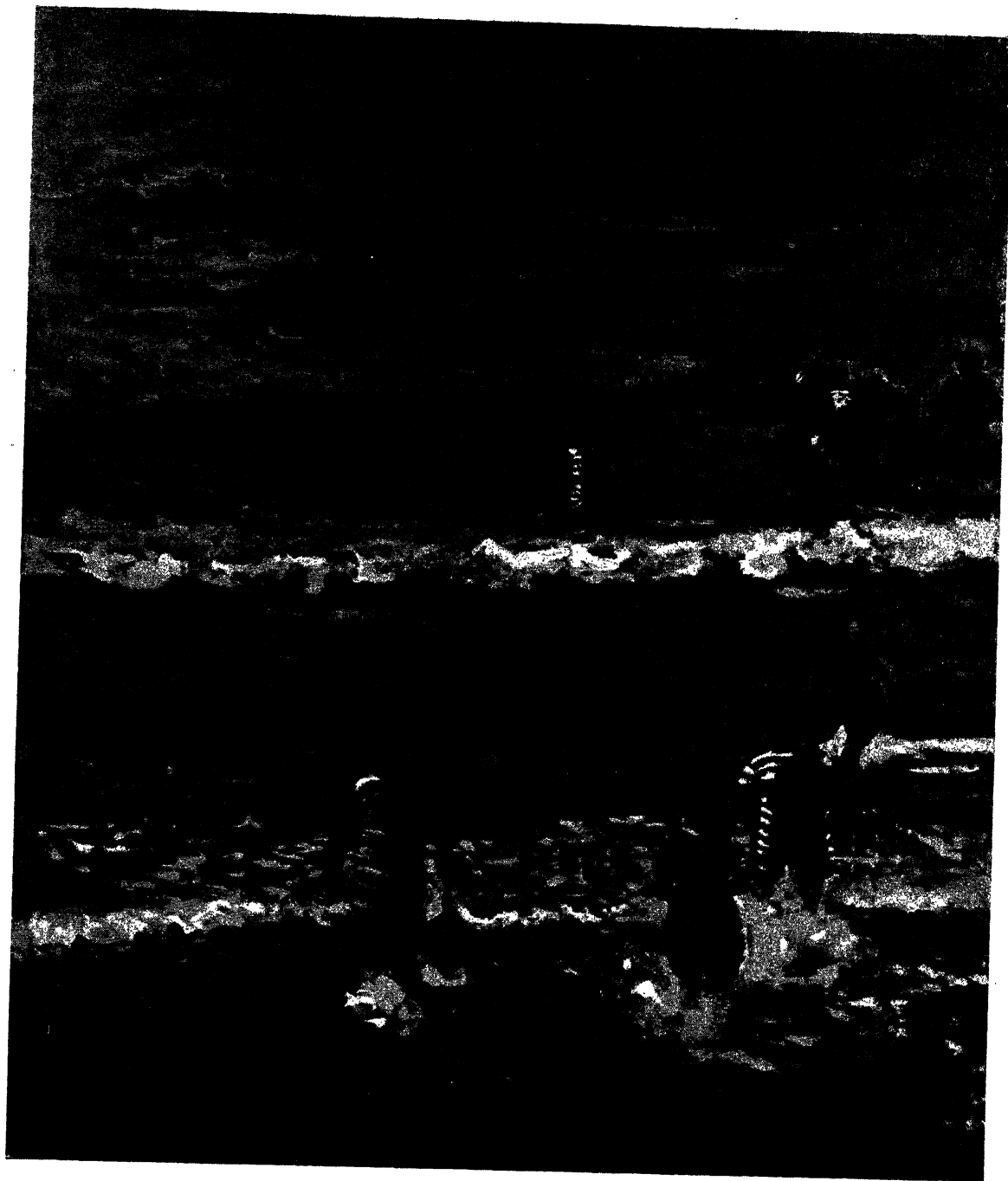
15a. THÉÂTRE DE MONTMARTRE: *circa 1900*



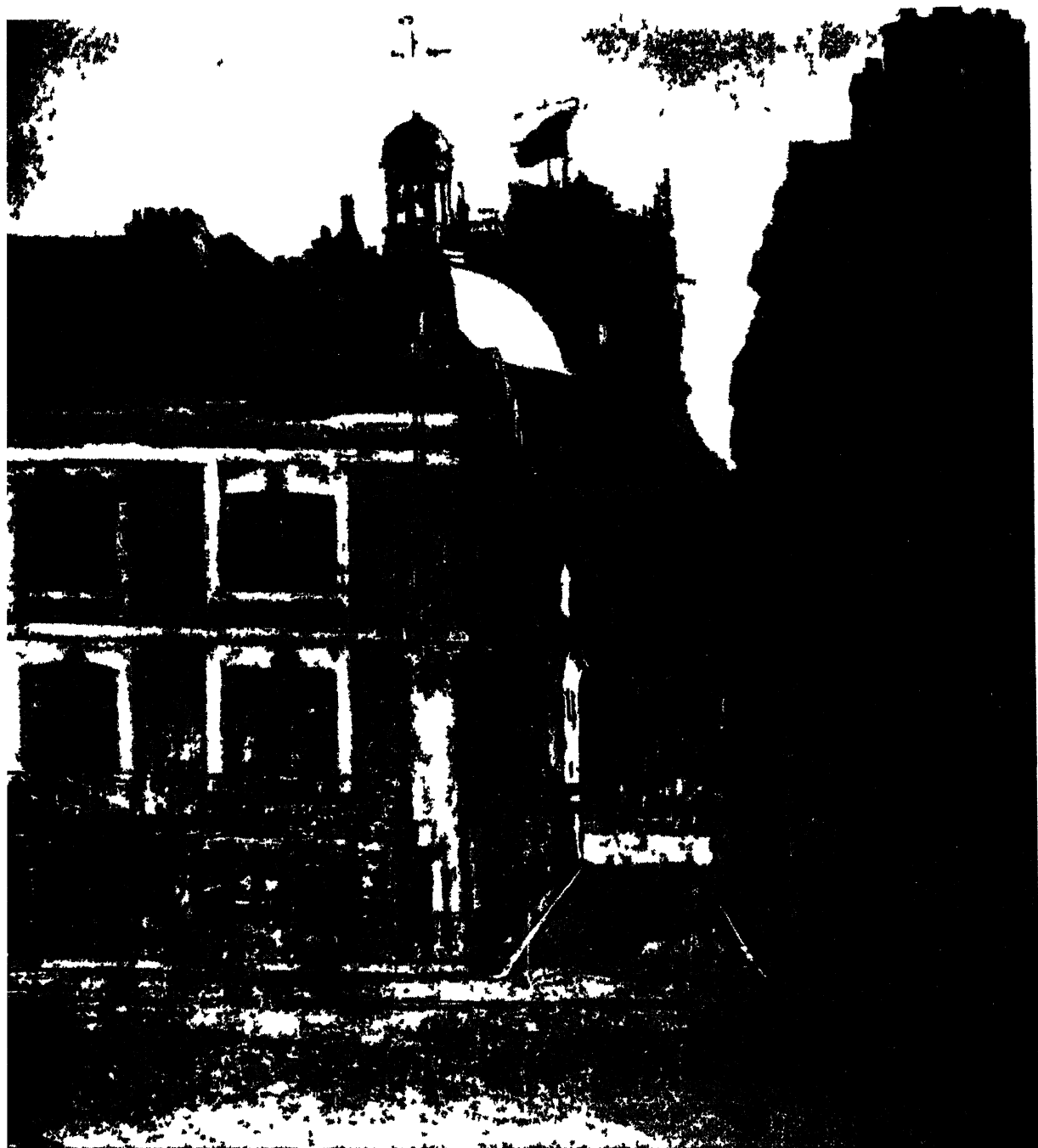




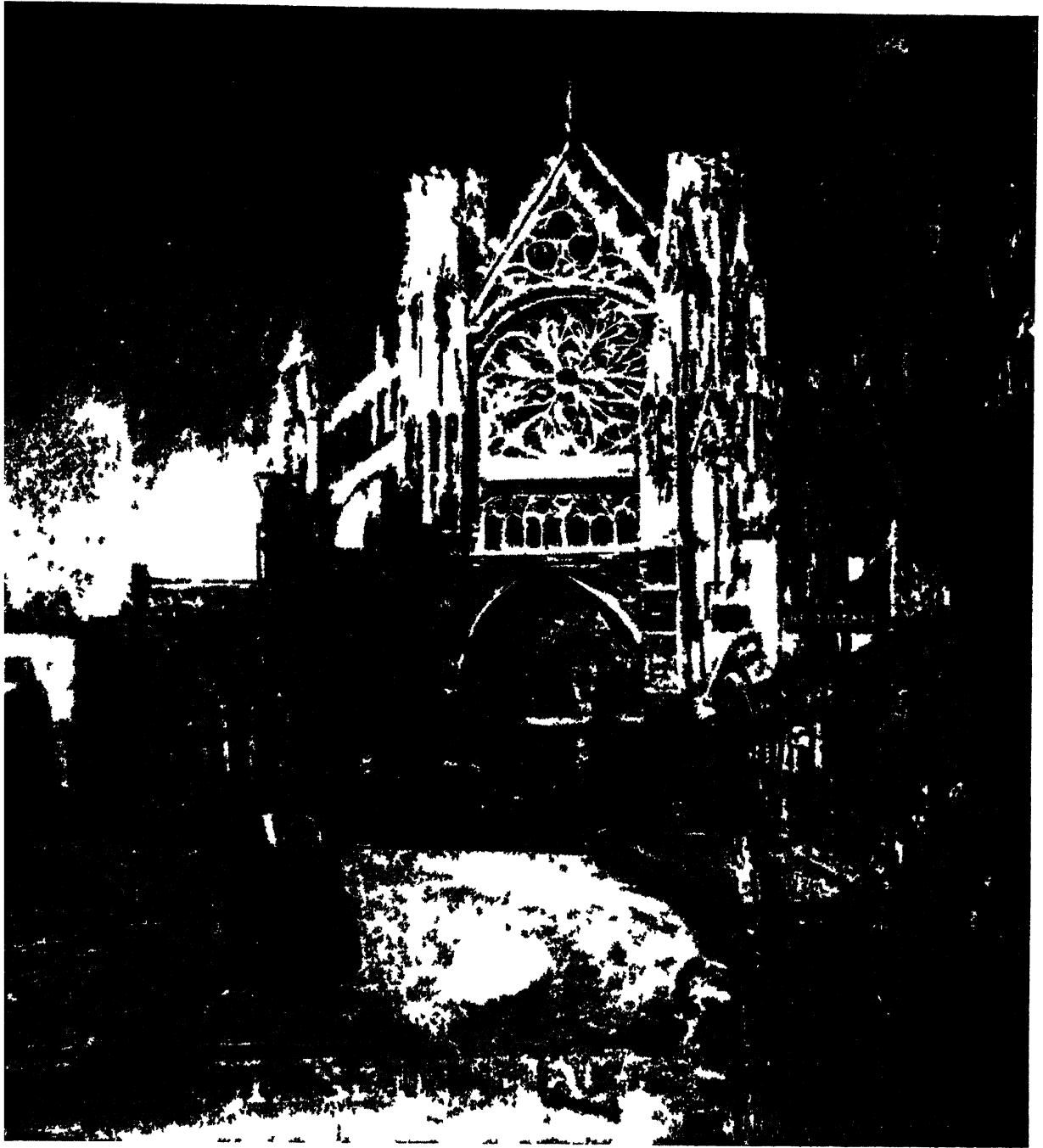
16. STATUE OF DUQUESNE, DIEPPE. 1902

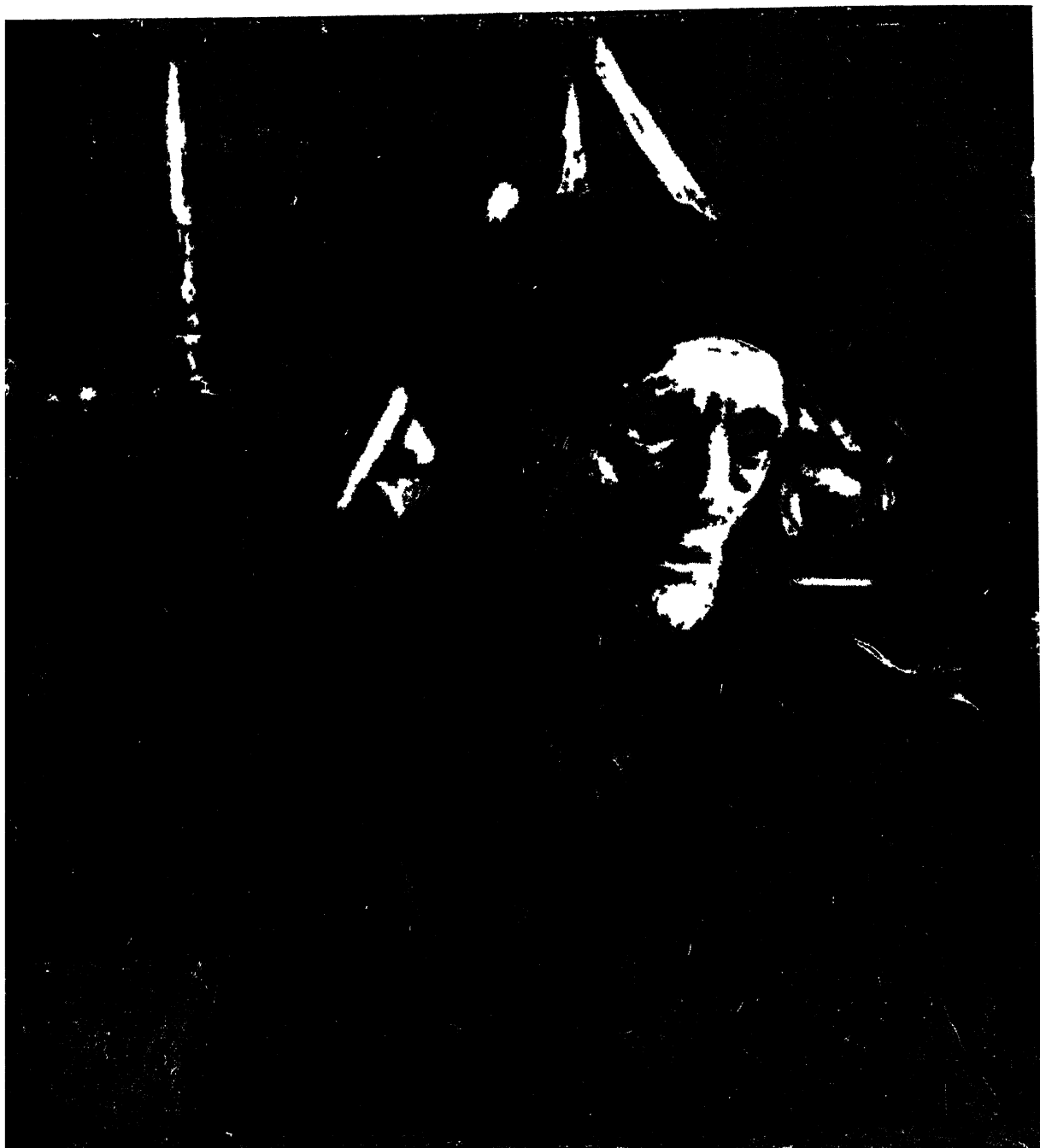


17. BATHERS, DIEPPE. 1902



3 RUE NOTRE DAME, DIEPPE 1902





MAMMA MIA POVERETIA : *circa 1903*





THE BERIBBONED WASHSTAND *circa 1903*

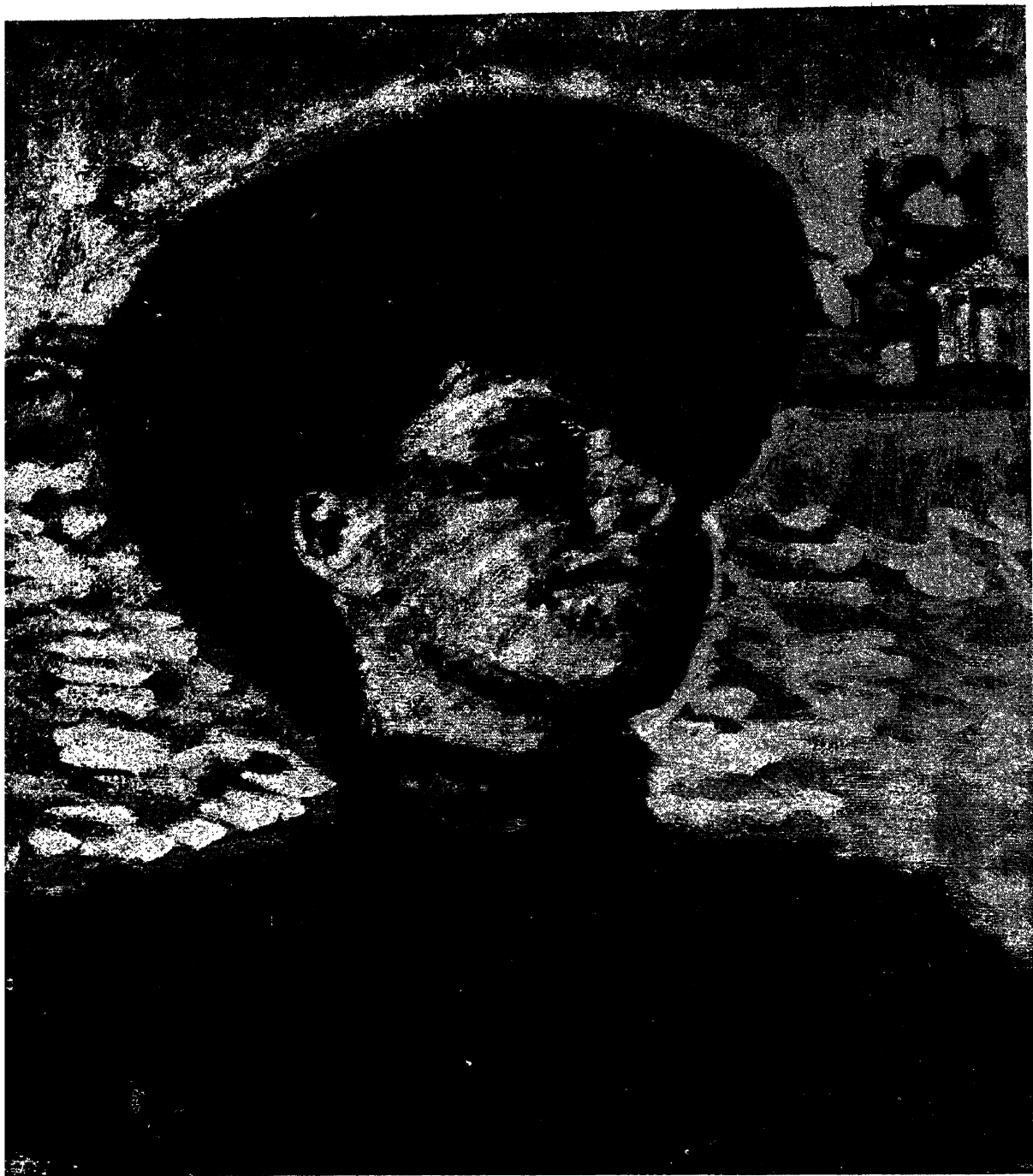


23. RESTING *circa 1903*

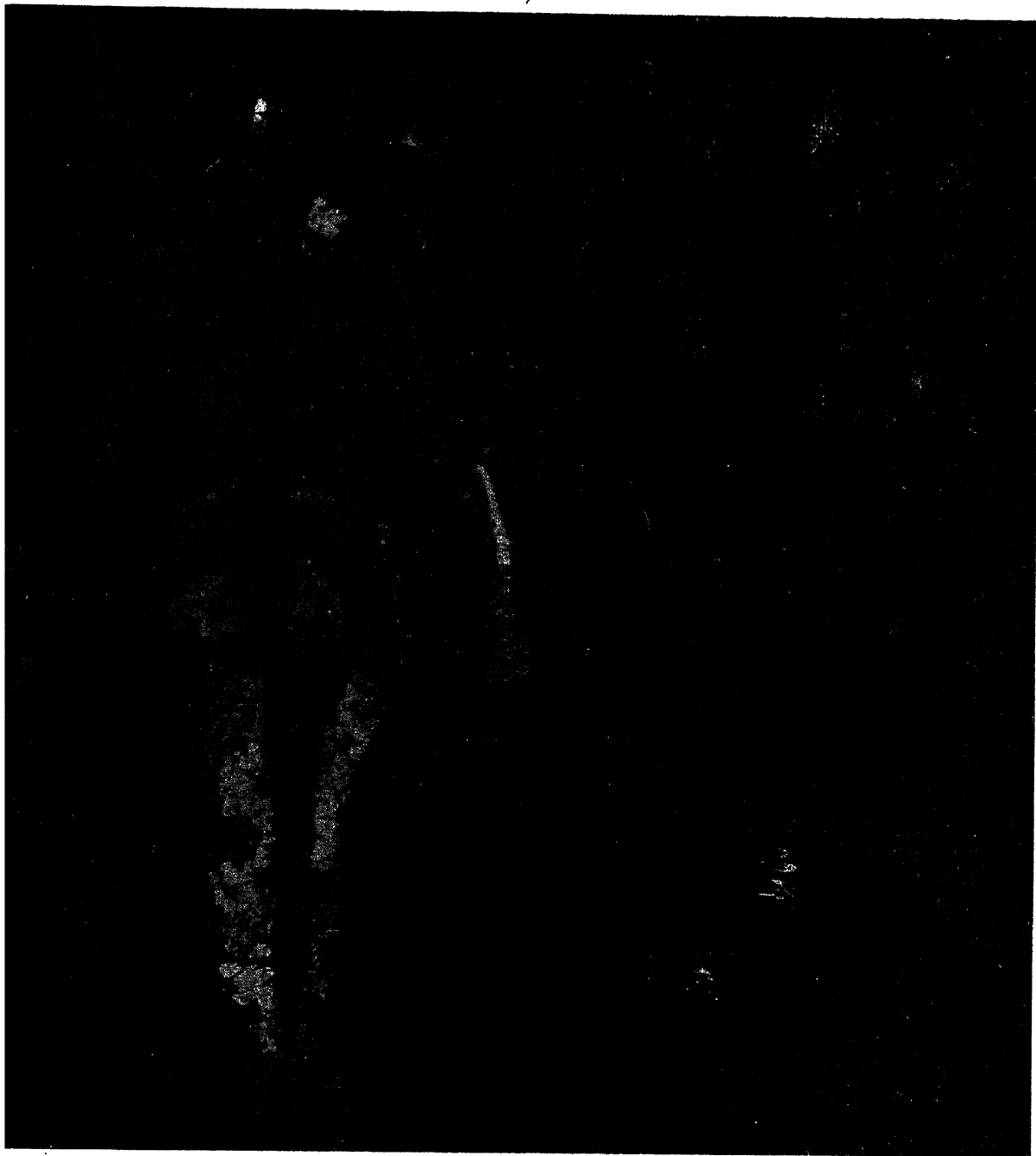
23a. NUDE, VENICE . *circa 1903*





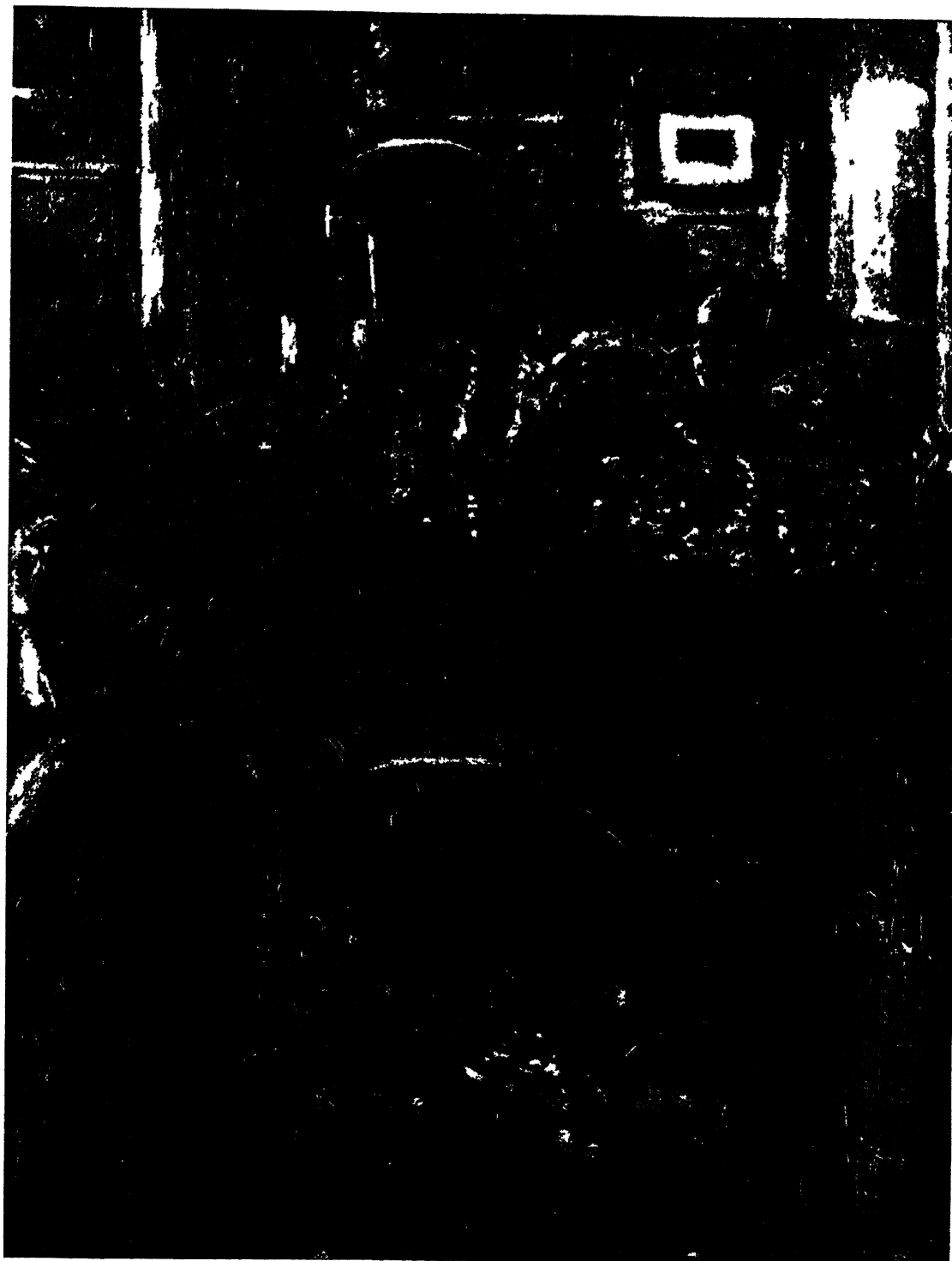


THE LADY IN THE GONDOLA : *circa 1905-6*



25. NUDE AT MIRROR : *circa 1907*





27. THE MANTELPIECE *circa 1907*

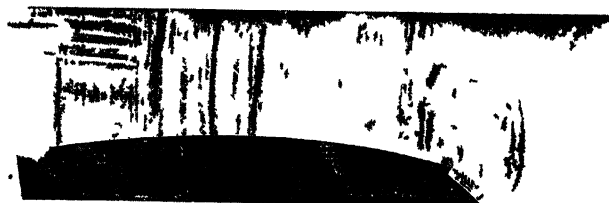


28 THE CAMDEN TOWN MURDER *circa 1907*

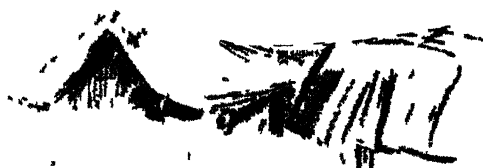
28a LA BELLE GATEE 1908

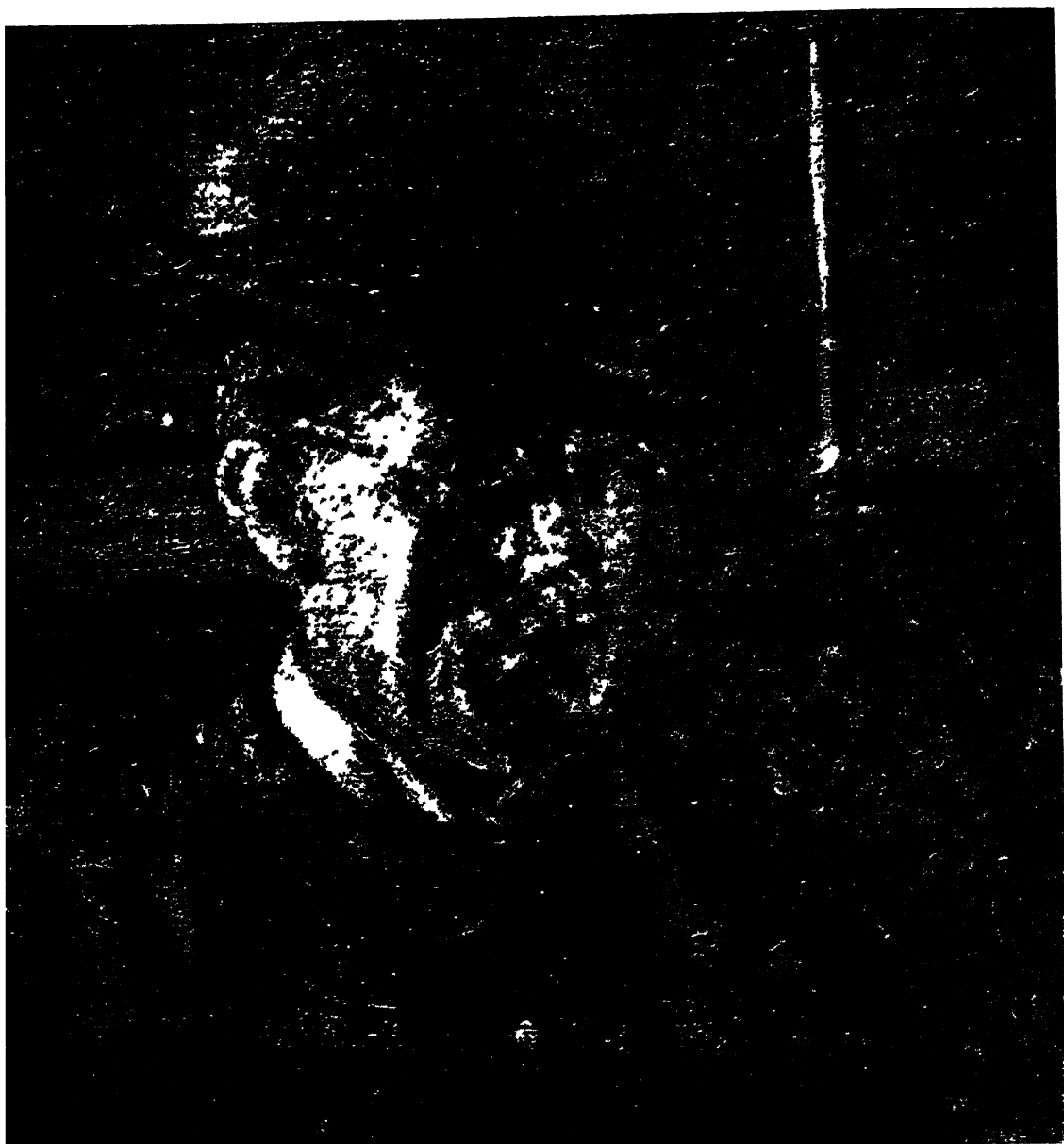


29 MORNINGTON CRESCENT *circa 1907*



29a. MORNINGTON CRESCENT *circa 1907*



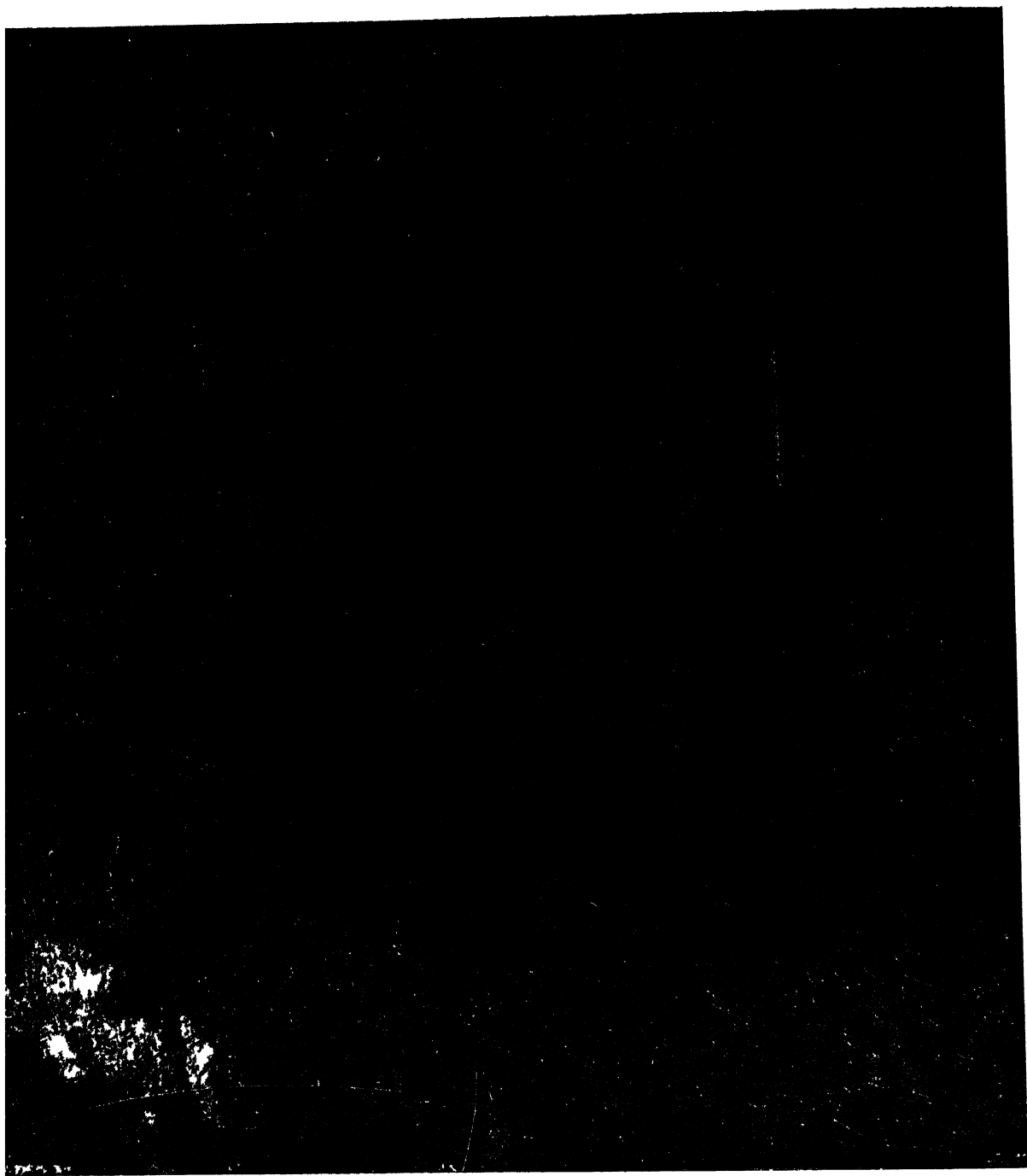


THE JUVENILE LEAD *circa 1908*



31 MRS. BARRETT : *circa 1908*

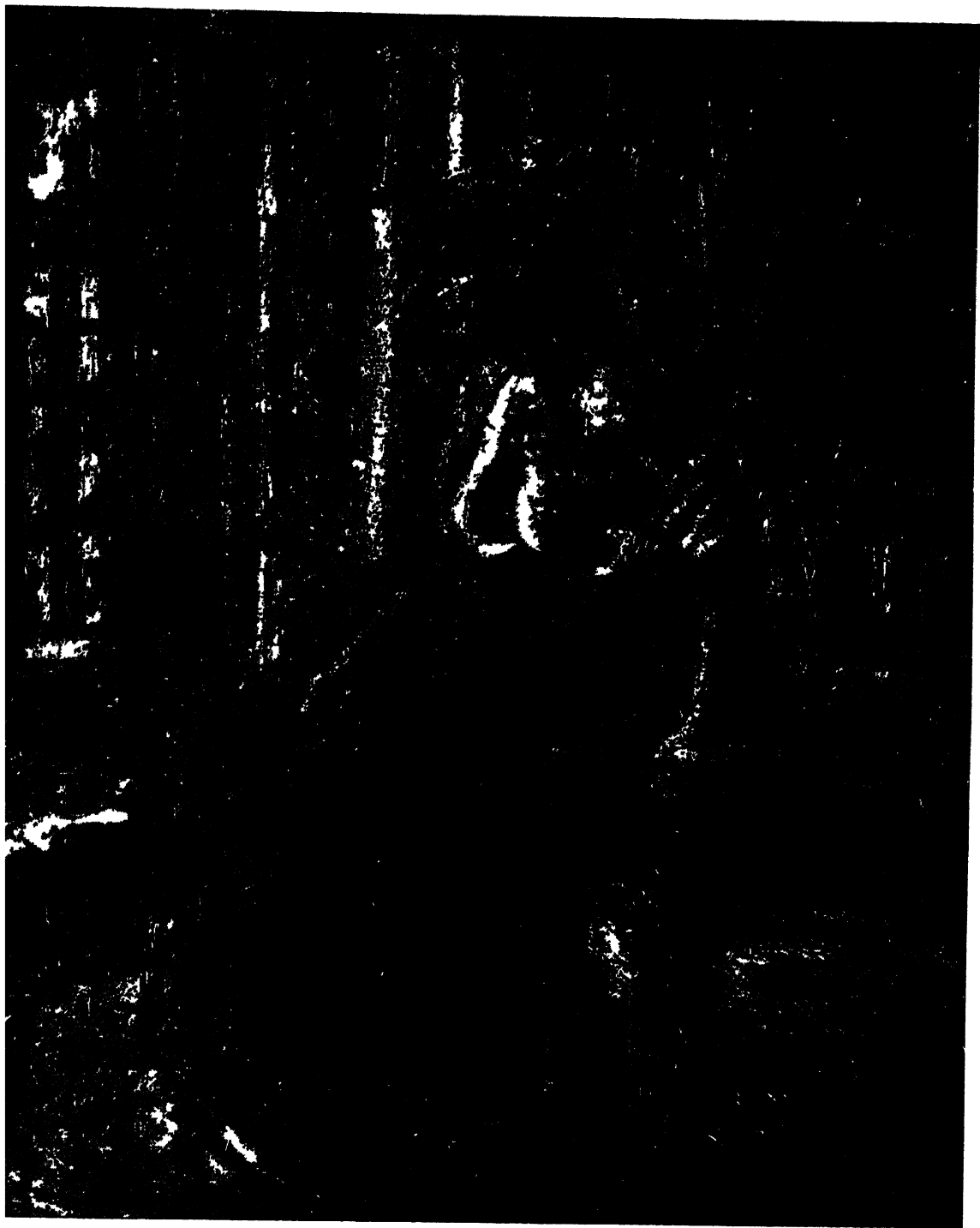




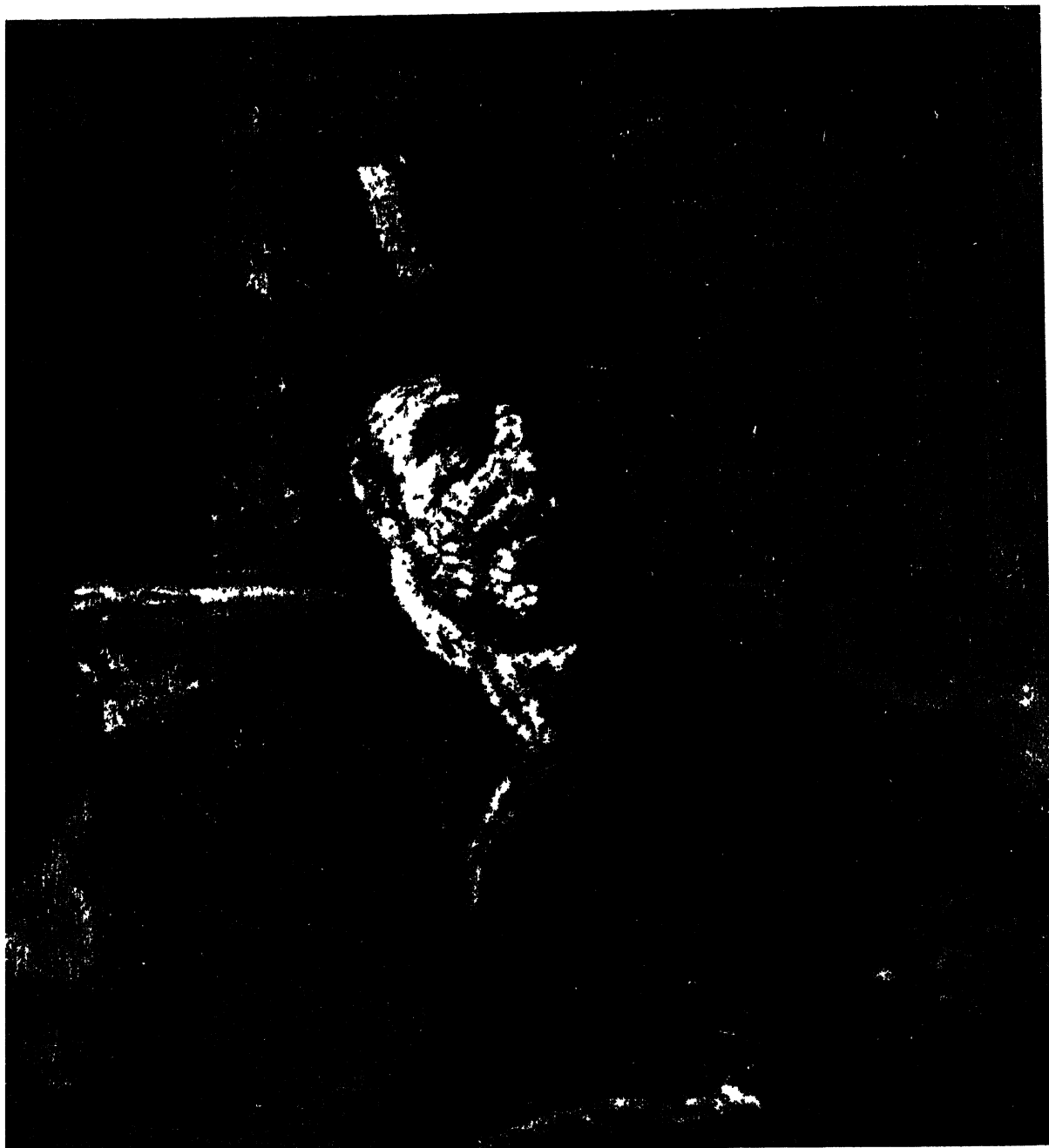
2 MORNINGTON CRISCINI, NUDE circa 1908







35. GRANBY STREET    *circa 1909*



6. JACQUIS-EMILF BLANCHE 1909

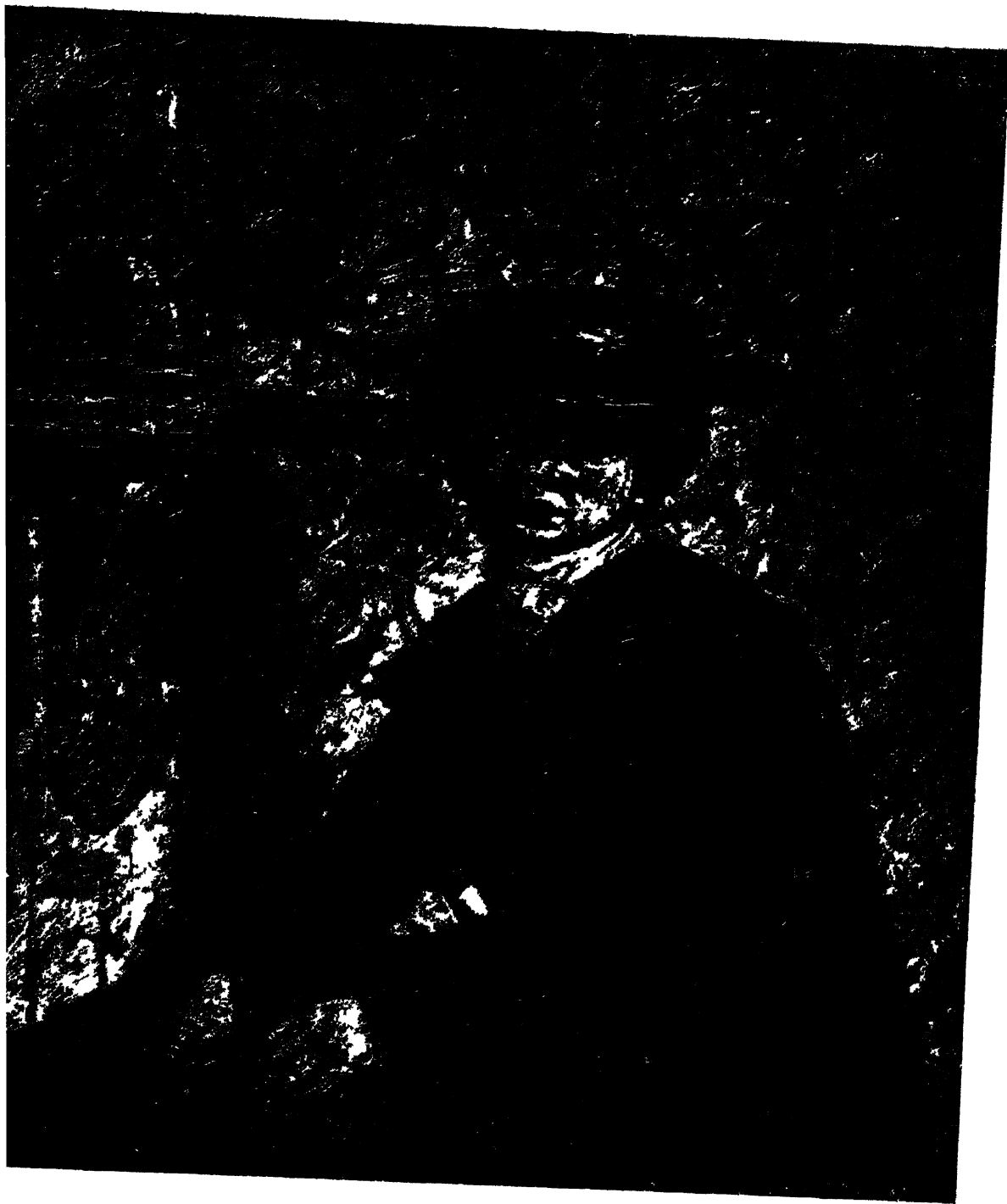


37. MISS HUDSON AT ROWLANDSON HOUSE. 1912



38 LE VIEUX COLOMBIER 1912

38a VILLAS UNDER CLIFFS—DIEPPE, 1920



39. THE NEW HOME : *circa 1912*





40. SUNDAY AFTERNOON. 1912



41. THE BLUE HAT : *circa 1913*



ANUI : circa 1913



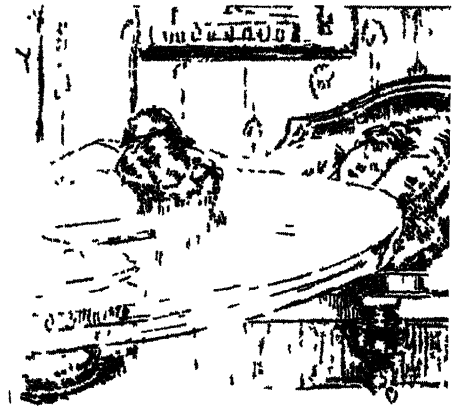
43. SOLDIERS OF KING ALBERT THE READY. 1914



SUSPENSE • *circa 1916*



45 THE LITTLE TEA PARTY—  
NINA HAMNETT AND ROALD KRISTIAN 1916



45a THE NAPOLEON III TOBACCO JAR *circa* 1917

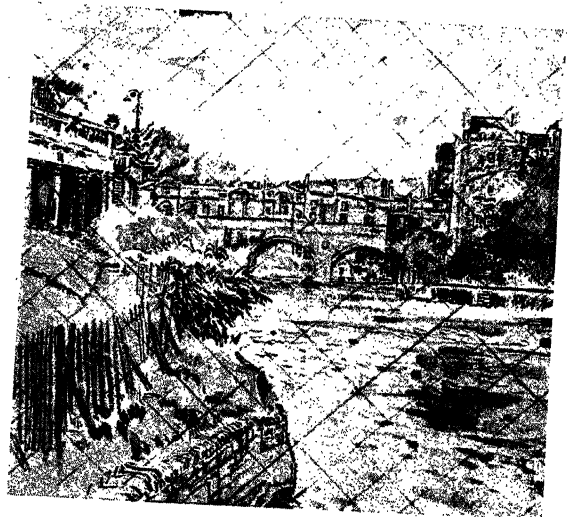


CAMDEN TOWN : *circa 1916*



47. PULTENEY BRIDGE, BATH. 1917

47a. PULTENEY BRIDGE, BATH. 1917





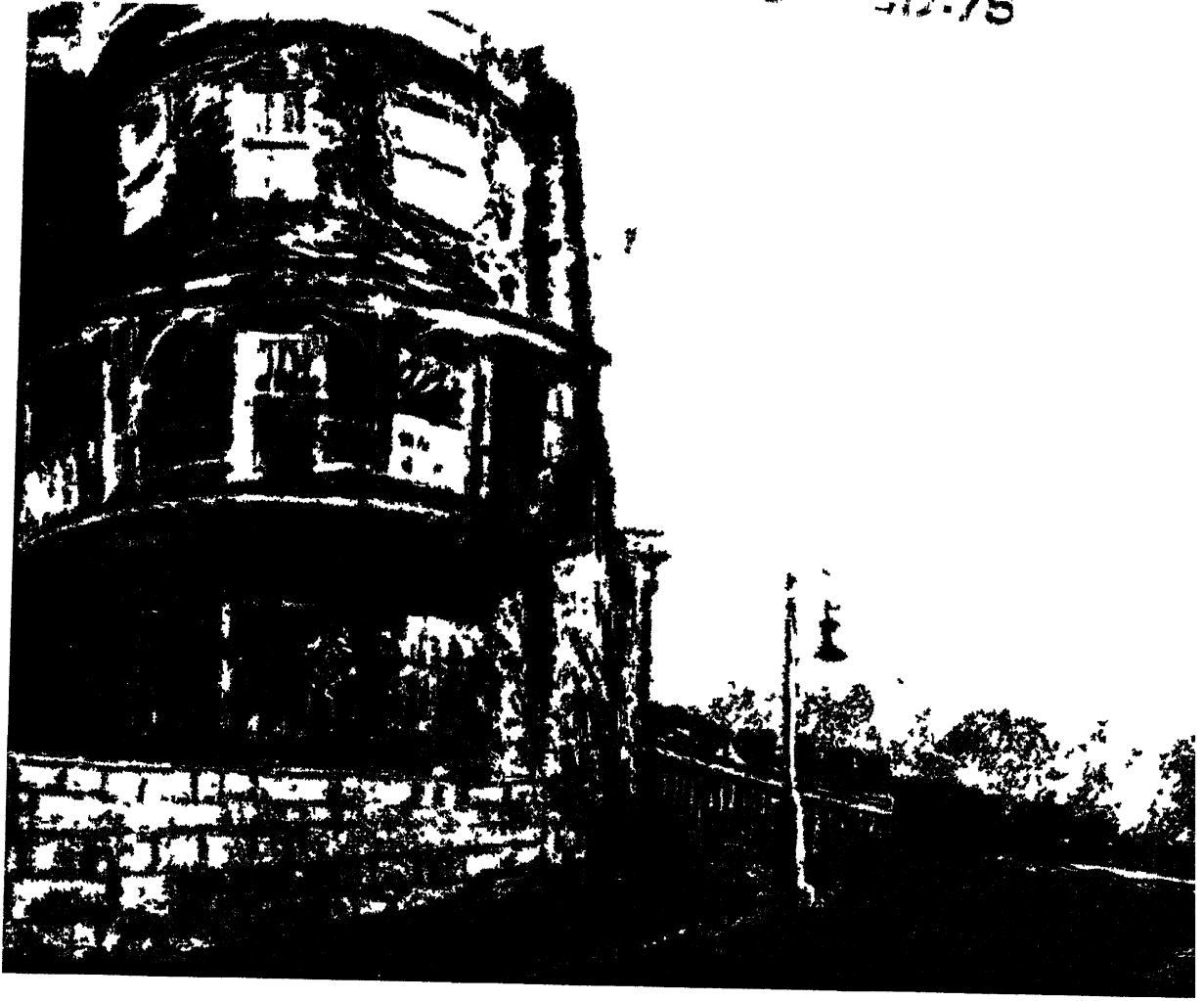


48 BELVEDERE, BATH *circa 1917 18*



48a BELVEDERE, BATH *circa 1917 18*

CHECKED-75



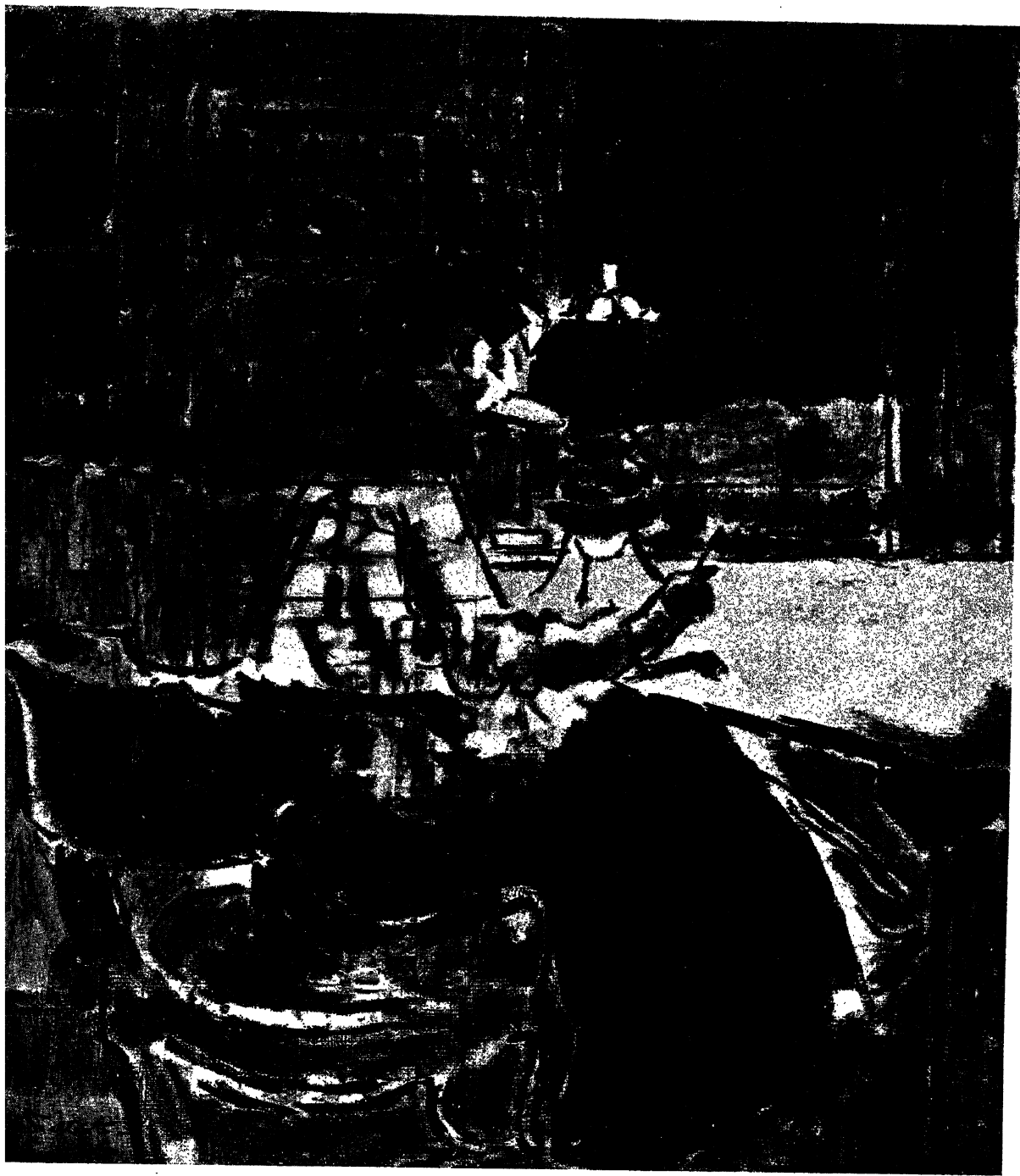
49 MR SHEEPHANKS HOUSE BATH *circa 1917 18*

49a LANSDOWNE CRESCENT, BATH *circa 1918*





PARADISE ROW, BATH : *circa 1917-18*

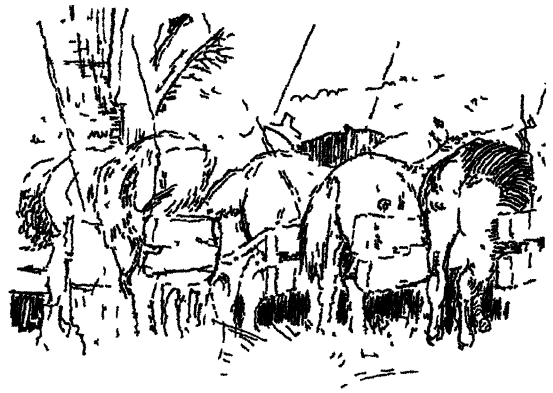


51. CHRISTINE DRUMMOND SICKERT, *NÉE* ANGUS, BUYS A GENDARMERIE. 1919





53 THE TRAPEZF 1920

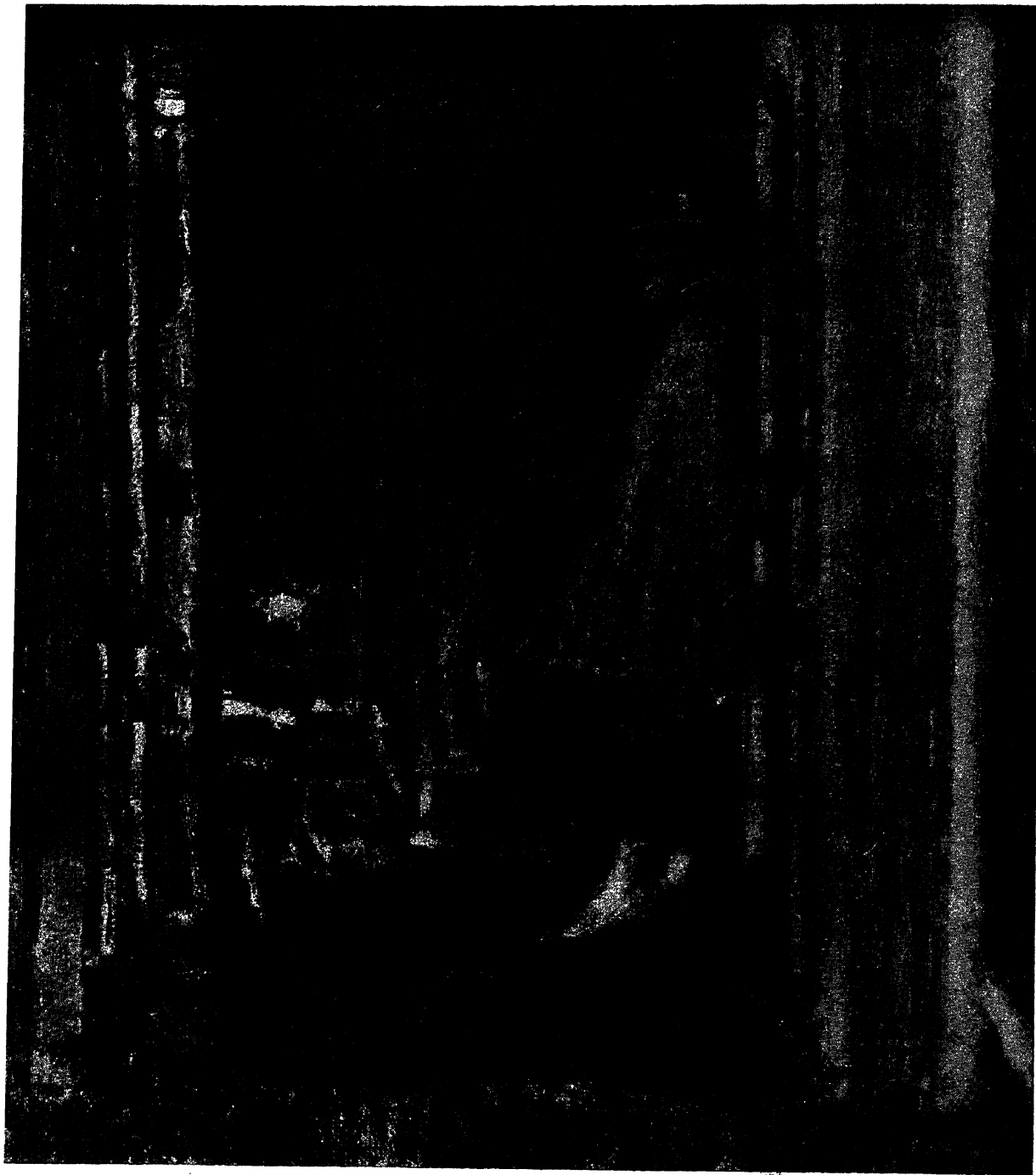


53a CIRCUS PONIES circa 1920

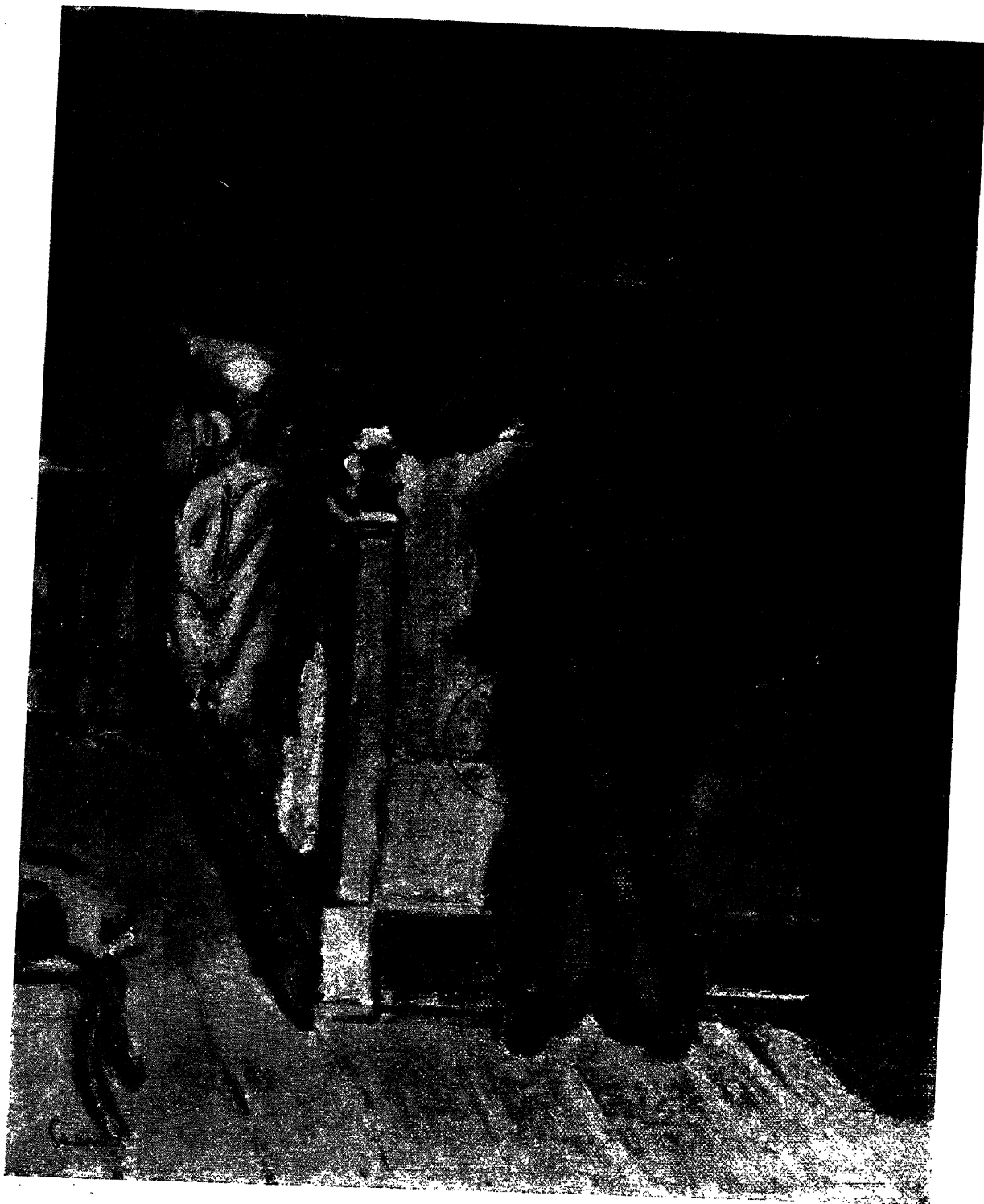




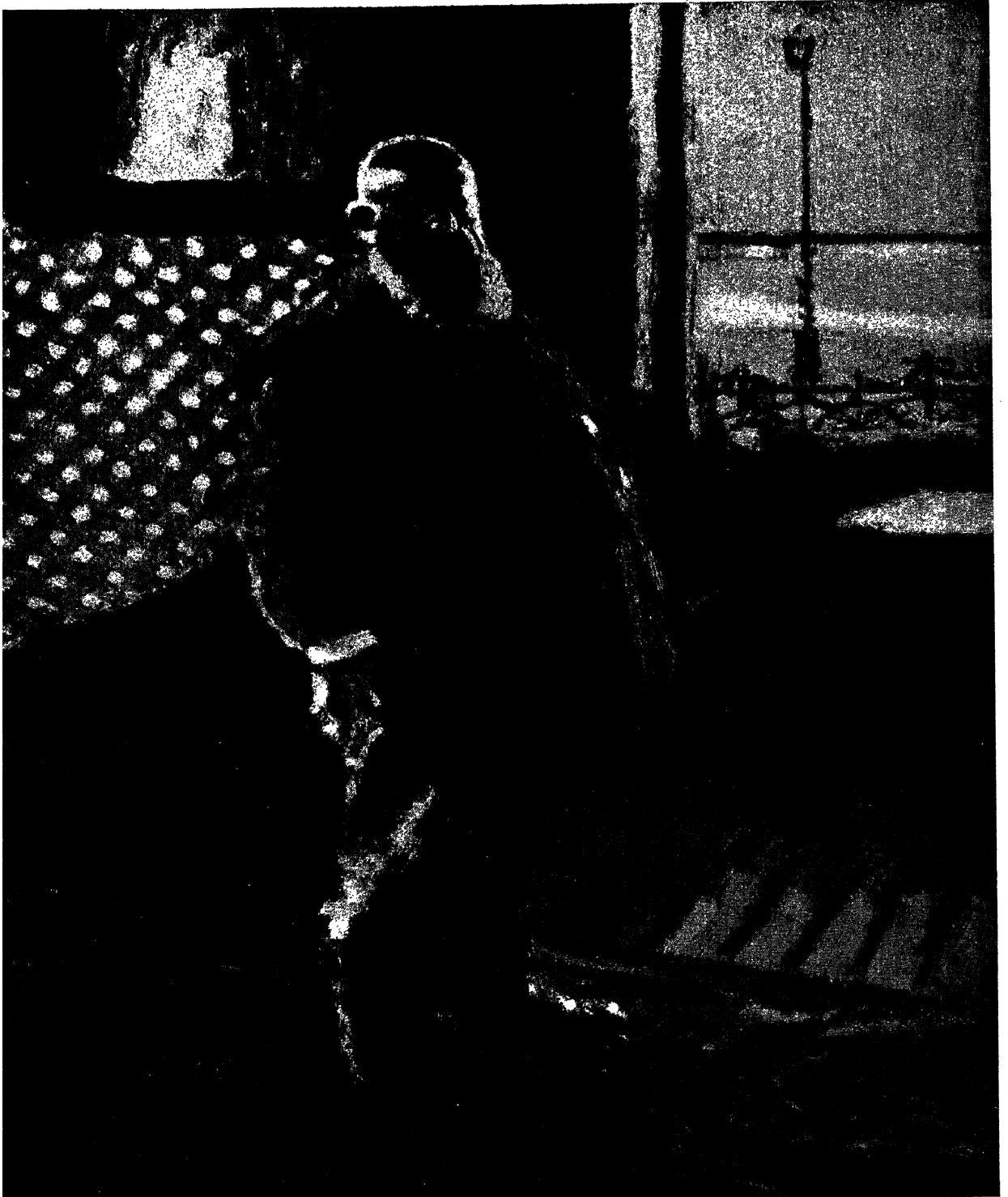




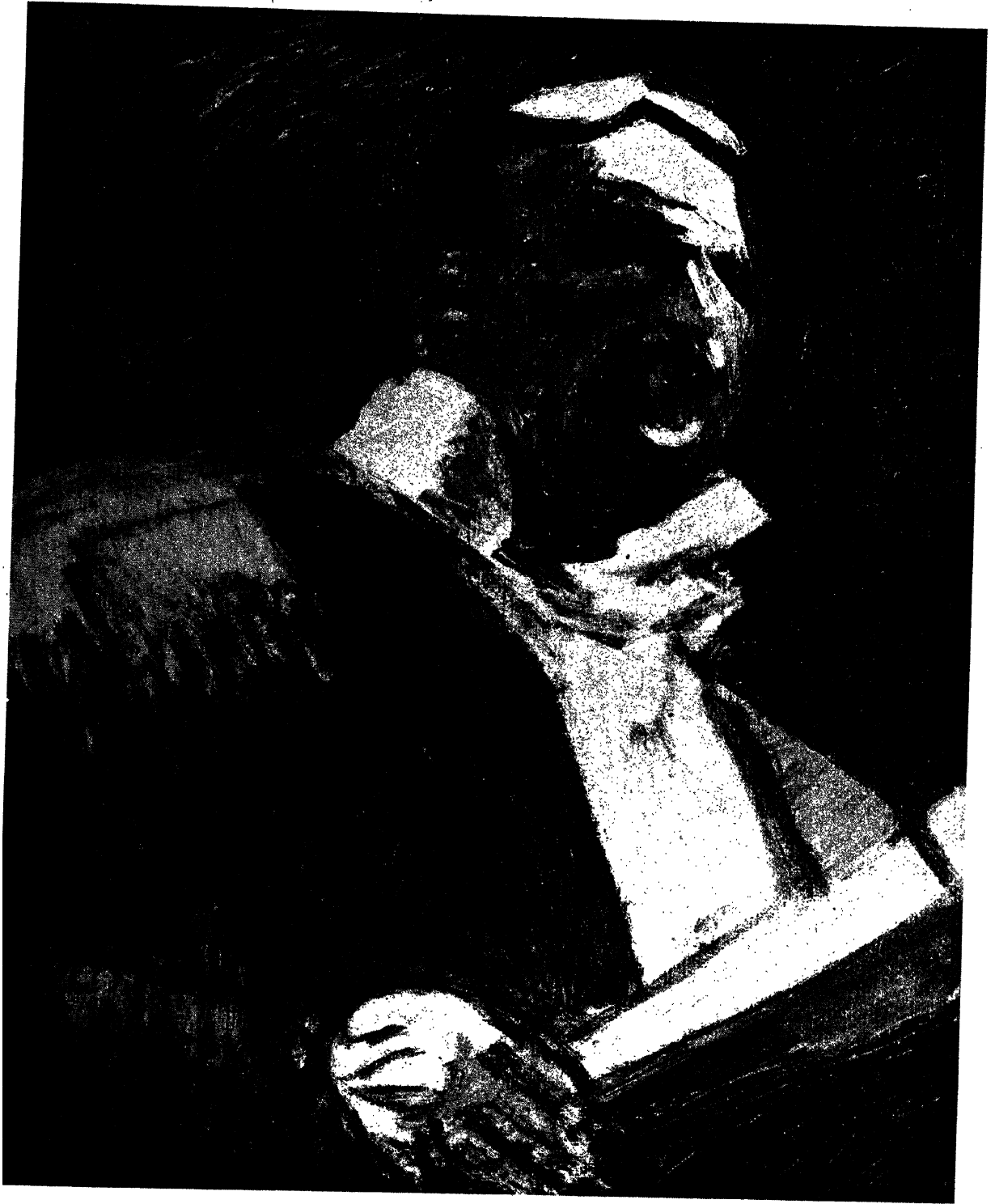
PARISIENNE. 1921



57. THE PREVARICATOR. 1921



VICTOR LECOUR. 1922



59. SIGNOR BATTISTINI. 1925



60 THE SERPENTINE circa 192

60a THE SERPENTINE 192



61 FADING MEMORIES OF SIR WALTER SCOTT *circa 1927*

61a HANGING GARDENS OF ISLINGTON *circa 1927*



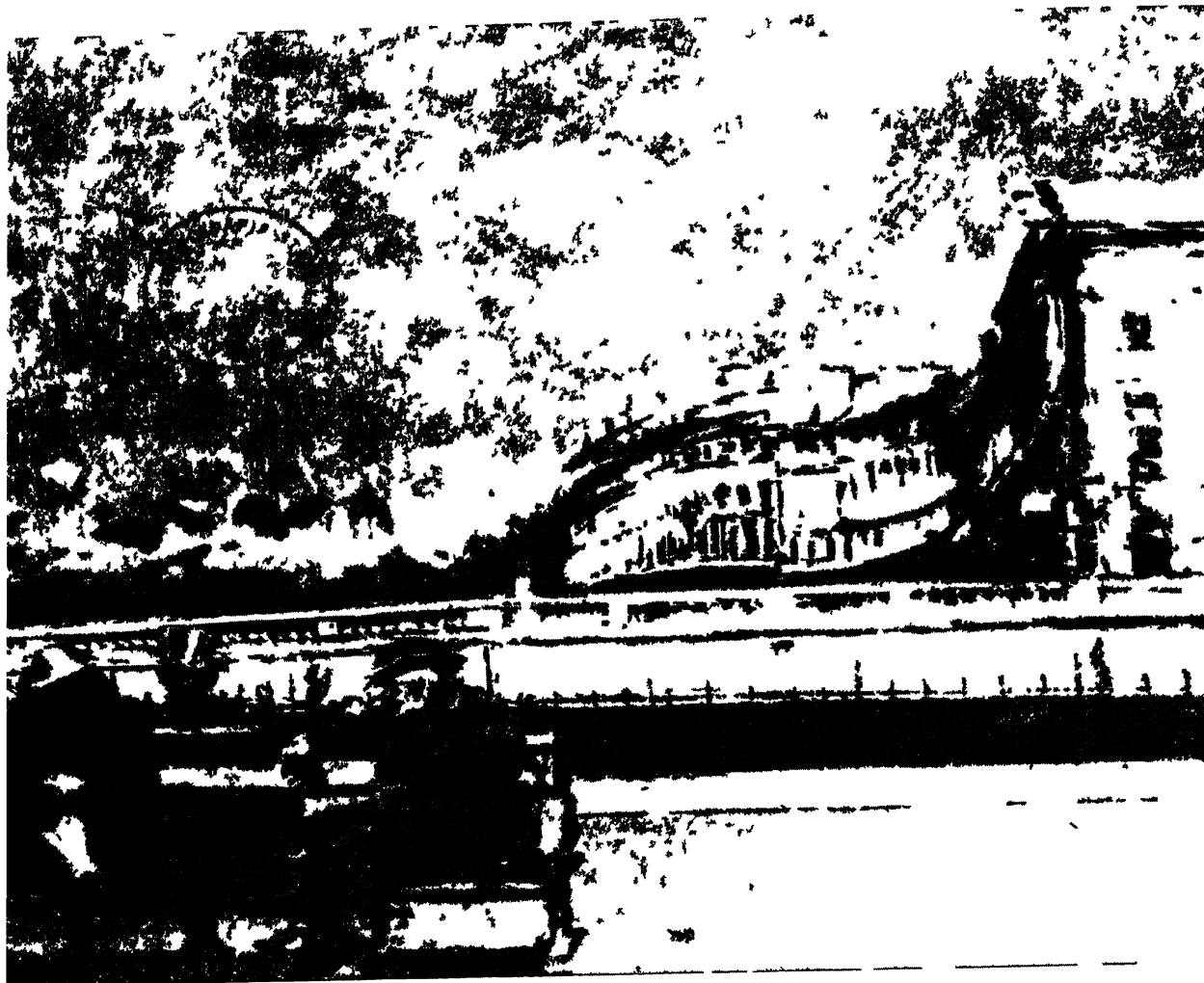


62. THE RAISING OF LAZARUS 1928 9



63. SIR NIGEL PLAYFAIR IN 'SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER' 1928





JRPI SINIX MILLS TURPE SENILIS AMOR —THE FRONT AT HOVE 1930

1

2

3



SIRENS ABOARD *circa 1936*

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

(In all cases, I refer to the spectator's 'right' and 'left', and give the height measurement of the picture first. In mentioning pictures not reproduced, I have omitted the names of the owners only when I have not been able to trace them. L.B.)

### Frontispiece LA GIUSEPPINA

A portrait in profile showing head and shoulders. The model faces right with hair piled, in Venetian fashion, on the top of her head. On wall behind hangs a large map of Venice inscribed 'Venezia' in bottom right corner. Picture light in tone, hair forming dark mass; paint smooth and thin showing grain of canvas, handling free.

*Oil on canvas. Size 20 × 16 ins. Signed 'Sickert' top right-hand corner. Painted circa 1903. Formerly in the possession of J. Oliver, Esq. Present owners Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hughes.*

The picture was painted in the room at 940 calle dei Frati, see also Pls. 20 and 22.

### Coloured plate facing page 33. SIRENS ABOARD

A group of young women aboard a yacht. They are in gaily coloured dresses; one is standing in the centre of the picture, facing left, holding up a pair of binoculars; to her right, another is seated reading; behind them the Union Jack flutters. Paint thin and dry showing the coarse grain of the canvas; picture very light in tone.

*Oil on canvas. Size 31 × 19½ ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner; in left corner inscribed 'J. S. Seccombe'. Painted circa 1936.*

Present owner Mrs. E. P. Dorian Reed.

This picture, one of those known as the *Echoes*, has been taken from a print by the Victorian illustrator J. S. Seccombe, whom Sickert acknowledges on the painting.

### I. THE ACTING MANAGER

A full-length portrait of Mrs. D'Oyly Carte seated on an upholstered sofa placed almost right across the canvas. She is in a long, dark dress, facing left. One arm, resting on the back of the sofa, is folded over her head, the other hangs loosely, handkerchief in hand. Behind a pedestal table on which stands a shaving mirror reflecting a green shaded light. The scene is lit from above and is bathed in a green light.

*Oil on canvas. Size 24 × 20 ins. Unsigned. Painted circa 1884.*

Present owner Mrs. Holland.

One of the first pictures Sickert exhibited. There is an etching of the same title but different in composition—Mrs. D'Oyly Carte is seated at a table on which stands a

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

reading lamp. The etching is dated 1884 and presumably the painting is about the same date.

### 2. THE OLD MIDDLESEX

A view inside the theatre looking down upon orchestra pit and front rows of stalls from a box. In foreground the curve of the box; on its ledge, in bottom right corner, a match stand and programme. On left side of canvas the orchestra, on right, the audience. The picture is very low in key. The house is in darkness, only the lights from the stage catch the faces of the audience, play on the brass railings and on the programme. The smoky atmosphere is beautifully expressed. Paint smooth and generally rather thin showing grain of canvas in many parts.

*Oil on canvas. Size 25 × 30 ins. Signed 'Sickert' bottom right-hand corner. Painted circa 1887. Present owners Beaux Arts Gallery, London.*

There is an etching of this subject published by the Carfax Gallery, St. James', in 1915.

### 2a. THE MOGUL TAVERN, DRURY LANE

A view of part of the gallery with the audience leaning over and through the railings, looking down at the stage.

*Etching. Size 7 × 5½ ins. Signed 'Sickert' bottom right-hand corner and dated 1908. Inscribed 'The Mogul Tavern, Drury Lane'.*

This is part of the composition of 'Noctes Ambrosianae' of which subject there are various oils, drawings and an etching. One oil painting is in the possession of Mrs. J. B. Priestley, another belongs to Mr. Morton Sands. There is also an oil painting called *The Mogul Tavern*.

### 3. GATTI'S HUNGERFORD PALACE OF VARIETIES, SECOND TURN OF KATIE LAWRENCE

A full view of the stage from the stalls. In right foreground the back of a woman's head in tricorn hat; on her left a man in bowler hat. Beyond them the audience and orchestra pit with the chairman, Tom Tinsley, addressing audience. The stage occupies rest of canvas, in centre of it stands the artiste. The interior is in darkness excepting for the spotlight playing on Katie Lawrence, who stands out brilliantly in the low-toned canvas. Paint smooth and thin.

*Oil on canvas. Size 38½ × 33½ ins. Signed 'Sickert' bottom right-hand corner. Painted circa 1888.*

Exhibited New English Art Club, Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly 1888; Munich 1900. Present owner Mrs. J. B. Priestley.

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### 3a. THE SAFETY CURTAIN

A view of the proscenium in a French theatre with Safety Curtain lowered. The leader of the orchestra, playing his violin, in centre foreground; the heads of audience in front row stalls are sketched in.

*Chalk. Size unknown. Unsigned. Colour notes written by the artist all over drawing. Drawn circa 1900-05.*

Present owner unknown.

### 4. THE OLD BEDFORD

A close-up view from behind of the leader of the orchestra playing his violin; the 'cellist on his left, and a spectator in straw hat behind him to the right. The three figures form a triangle against the stage and side of proscenium and are thrown into silhouette by the stage lights. The painting is smooth and low in key.

*Oil on canvas. Size 8 × 10 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted circa 1890. Present owner G. Harvey Samuel, Esq.*

Sickert made some very careful drawings with detailed notes on colour of the frieze decorating the interior of the Old Bedford. These drawings are dated 1888, so it is possible that the picture reproduced here, was painted a year or two before the date given above. The frieze can be seen to the left of the 'cellist, and also on the extreme right of canvas.

### 4a. 'THE LONDON' AT SHOREDITCH

A view inside the theatre looking along the orchestra pit towards the boxes on extreme left; on the right the leader of the orchestra. On the same sheet are studies of the first violinist and the player immediately behind him; the attendant; and the head of a woman singing.

*Pencil drawing. Size unknown. Unsigned. Notes are written on the sheet by the artist. Drawn 1920.*

Present owner unknown.

There is an etching of the same subject.

### 5. THE OLD BEDFORD

A view inside the theatre showing a corner of the gallery. The composition is divided vertically into two parts. On the right-hand side about half a dozen people are looking down towards the stage from the gallery; some are sitting, those behind are standing. On the left, where the wall turns at right angles, a large mirror reflects some of the audience. Picture fairly light in key, general tones warm, paint smooth.

*Oil on canvas. Size 21 × 15½ ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted circa 1890.*

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

Exhibited 'Biennial International Exhibition', Venice, 1936; 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 18.

Formerly in the possession of the late E. M. B. Ingram, Esq., by whom it was bequeathed to the present owners, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

The 'Old Bedford' Music Hall in Camden Town was burned down in 1899 and the 'New Bedford' (Pls. 26 and 26a) was built on the same site. There are many versions of this subject in oil, drawing and etching. A very small oil ( $9\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$  ins.) and almost identical with the one reproduced, belongs to the painter, Edward le Bas; another of the same composition, but seen from a greater distance and showing more of the ceiling, is in the possession of the Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey. A drawing in charcoal on grey paper inscribed '*Painted on a canvas given me by F. Forster . . .*' belongs to Mrs. Swinton; a drawing in pen and ink and squared was presented to the Capetown Art Gallery, S.A., in 1926 by Professor Tonks. The alternative title for this subject is *Cupid in the Gallery*.

### 6. P. WILSON STEER

A full-length portrait of Steer as a young man seated in a wicker chair facing quarter left; arms resting on the arms of the chair, leg nearest spectator rests on the knee of the other; the full-length portrait of Miss Fancourt by Sickert almost fills the background. The picture is low in tone lightened by the gold of *Miss Fancourt's* frame, the yellow of the chair and the flesh tones.

*Oil on canvas. Size 36 x 24 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted 1890.*

Exhibited at the New English Art Club, Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, 1890. Formerly in the possession of the sitter and bequeathed by him to the National Portrait Gallery, London.

Sickert and Steer were born in 1860 and died within a few months of each other at the age of eighty-one. They were both original members of the New English Art Club and were in the 'George Moore' circle. The portrait has been in Steer's possession since it was painted, presumably at 54 Broadhurst Gardens, Hampstead—since the canvas bears a label on the back with this address. The portrait of Miss Fancourt was also painted in 1890, I do not know its present whereabouts.

### 7. CHARLES BRADLAUGH

A head-and-shoulders portrait of the politician as an old man with long white hair. Facing left, seen in three-quarter profile looking downwards, apparently reading. Pigment smooth and thin showing grain of canvas; picture dark with the exception of the face and shirt-front on which a strong light plays.

*Oil on canvas. Size unknown. Unsigned. Painted circa 1890.*

Exhibited New English Art Club, Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, 1890. Present owners the National Liberal Club, London.

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Sickert met various people in the political world when he married his first wife, Ellen Cobden, in 1885. He painted two portraits of Bradlaugh, the second—in which the politician is seen standing full-length at the Bar of the House—belongs to the Manchester Art Gallery. A pen drawing of the same sitter was reproduced in *The Whirlwind*, June 28th, 1890; in this he is shown in profile in front of a window, his study desk to the right. The drawing is signed and dated 1890.

### 8. MISS BEERBOHM

A young woman is seated in an interior facing right. Seen three-quarter length, seated at a table on which rests the arm nearest the spectator, with the hand supporting her head, and covering most of her face. Wearing dark dress with close-fitting bodice and brown hat. The table and chair are indicated by swift, economical brush strokes. Painted on golden brown panel which glows through the thin paint. A rapid sketch taken from life, I do not know of any more highly finished picture of this subject.

*Oil on panel. Size 12½ × 10½ ins. Unsigned. Painted 1894.*

Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition' National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 15.

Formerly in the possession of the sitter, to whom the artist gave it.

Present owner the Hon. Bryan Guinness.

Miss Agnes Mary Beerbohm, now Mrs. Vesey Knox, is the sister of the famous writer and cartoonist 'Max' (Sir Maxwell Beerbohm).

### 9. AUBREY BEARDSLEY

A full-length portrait of the artist at the age of twenty-two. He is standing facing left in a position of arrested movement; in cut-away coat, butterfly collar, holding silk hat, gloves and cane in hand; face seen in profile. Paint thin, handling very free; unfinished. The flat masses make a broad and simple design, the lighting is dramatic.

*Oil on canvas. Size 30½ × 12½ ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted 1894.*

Reproduced in the *Yellow Book* Vol. II, July 1894, p. 220.

Exhibited in the joint exhibition Sickert held with his brother Bernard, at Van Wisselingh's Gallery, off Bond Street in 1895.

Formerly in the possession of Mrs. E. A. Beardsley (the artist's mother) and sold by her Executors at Sotheby's, June 27th, 1932, where it was purchased by the present owners, the Tate Gallery, Millbank.

This picture was evidently inspired by the ceremony of the unveiling of the bust of Keats in Hampstead Church in the summer of 1894. Sickert has suggested tombstones in his background. Haldane Macfall in the foreword of his book *Aubrey Beardsley; The Man and His Work*, published by The Bodley Head, 1928, wrote "There was something strangely fantastic in the ungainly efforts at a dignified wayfaring over the mound-encumbered ground by the loose-limbed, lank figure so immaculately dressed in black cut-away coat and silk hat, who carried his lemon-yellow gloves in his long



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white hands, his lean wrists showing naked beyond his cuffs, his pallid, cadaverous face grimly set on avoiding falling over the embarrassing mounds that tripped his feet. . . . I judged him short-sighted; but was mistaken—he was fighting for breath. . . .’ Beardsley died four years later at the early age of twenty-six.

### 9a. AUBREY BEARDSLEY

A half-length portrait of Beardsley seated in arm-chair. Facing left, seen in profile, his one hand supports his head while the other, nearest the spectator, holds a stick.

*Pen drawing. Size unknown. Signed ‘Sickert’ in top right-hand corner. Drawn circa 1895. Reproduced in Le Courrier Français 1905; Aubrey Beardsley: Briefe. Pub. Hans von Weber. Munich, 1908. Frontispiece. Present owner unknown.*

In the foreword to the Munich publication, signed ‘F. B.’ it is interesting to note that this drawing is referred to as a ‘self-portrait’. The name of Sickert being apparently unknown to the editor he has taken the signature to be a statement on Beardsley’s health ‘Sickest’. Here is what he says ‘Das Selbstbildnis zeichnete Beardsley im Sommer 1894 zu Paris. In die Lehne des Stuhles schrieb er: sickest—ganz krank’. Beardsley was in Dieppe for a short while in 1895, and as Sickert probably called there on his way to Venice in that year, it is more likely that the drawing was made in Dieppe in 1895 and not in Paris in 1894.

### 10. THE DOGANA AND THE SANTA MARIA DELLA SALUTE

A view across the canal with the buildings in the centre background. In right bottom corner a gondola, many others moored in the middle distance; poles are dotted about the canal, their reflections seen in the water. Paint smooth, high-lights on the buildings and water immediately beneath; the group of gondolas form the dark mass in the picture.

*Oil on canvas. Size 16½ × 24 ins. Signed ‘Sickert’ in bottom right-hand corner and dated 1896. Present owner Lt.-Col. Stanley Cohen.*

This view is almost identical with the Guardi of the same subject in the National Gallery, London. The picture was painted during Sickert’s first visit to Venice.

### oa. THE RIALTO

A view looking down the canal towards the bridge and buildings in the middle distance.

*Pen and wash. Size unknown. Unsigned. Drawn 1896. Present owner unknown.*

There are various paintings of this subject as well as other drawings and an etching-engraving. One oil is in the possession of the Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey; a pen and ink drawing is reproduced by Emmons, *op. cit.* p. 108. The etching-engraving (10th state)

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is inscribed by the artist '*Sickert Rialto Po* (for Palazzo) *Camerlenghi*'. (Sickert did not engrave until after 1916.)

### 11. VENICE CHURCH

A view of the front of a church whose façade fills most of the canvas. A procession of communicants is entering the church from the right; in foreground, steps leading down to the water; on extreme left and right of canvas other buildings are just visible, those on the right casting a diagonal shadow across the façade. Painted in quiet greys and browns with white, and little touches of pink; pigment smooth.

*Oil on canvas. Size  $13\frac{1}{2} \times 16\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted 1896. Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 59. Present owner Morton Sands, Esq.*

### 11a. ST MARK'S

A view of the façade of St. Mark's.

*Pen and wash on tinted paper. Size  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 12$  ins. Unsigned. Drawn circa 1896. Present owner Miss Sylvia Gosse.*

There are many paintings of this subject as well as other drawings and an etching. One of the largest oils ( $45 \times 60$  ins.) belongs to J. E. Crawford Flitch, Esq.; another ( $36 \times 47$  ins.) to General Sir Ian Hamilton; a third to Edward le Bas, A.R.A; a fourth, known as *Red Sky at Night*, is in the possession of the Hon. John Fremantle; and a fifth, with the Campanile ( $32 \times 24\frac{1}{2}$  ins.), belongs to the Leger Galleries, London. The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, owns a small oil study; one drawing is in the Rutherford Loan Collection, Manchester Art Gallery, and another belongs to Rex Nankivell, Esq.

### 12. CAFE DES TRIBUNAUX, DIEPPE

A view in the town up a street which forks off to the right in the middle distance. On extreme right of canvas the window of a 'Coiffeur' with its signboard in English and French; in middle distance, on corner of forked roads, the café with striped awnings; on extreme left a row of shops which disappear in the distance. Figures are dotted about in top half of picture, the foreground is empty. The sun casts deep shadows half way across the street, the café is in full sunlight. Underpainting thin showing grain of canvas, small strokes with loaded brush indicate high-lights.

*Oil on canvas. Size  $24 \times 28\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Unsigned. Painted circa 1900. Present owners the Tate Gallery, Millbank, to whom the picture was given by Miss Sylvia Gosse in 1917.*

There is an etching of the café similar in composition, but looking up another street,

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thus showing the right-hand side of the façade. It is dated 1885 and was reproduced in the *Whirlwind Diploma Gallery of Modern Pictures*, August 30th, 1890.

### 12a. 'THEY ALSO SERVE . . . '

A study of the cab rank in the Fishmarket, Dieppe. The cabs are lined up side by side, the one nearest the spectator being in the left middle-distance.

*Pen drawing. Size  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$  ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner (this corner of the paper is torn off). The artist has written the title on the left. Drawn circa 1920.*

Present owner Mrs. Sickert

An etching of this composition, published by the Leicester Galleries, has the alternative title *Barnett's Veterans*, Barnett being the owner of the four or five fiacres which used to stand on the Quai Henri IV. The title of the drawing comes from the last line of Milton's sonnet 'On his Blindness'—'They also serve who only stand and wait.'

### 13. THE OLD HOTEL ROYAL, DIEPPE

A view of the hotel from the Plage in front. In foreground a woman, in long white dress and large hat, with small girl, are seen walking towards the left; behind them on the turf several figures are dotted, many flags are fluttering in front of the hotel. Paint very smooth, figures sketched in with rapid strokes, tone light.

*Oil on canvas. Size unknown. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted circa 1900. Present owner Alfred de Pass, Esq.*

There are other paintings as well as drawings and an etching of this subject. It is interesting to compare the painting reproduced in the *Yellow Book*, Vol. IV, January, 1895, with the above. In the *Yellow Book* version—painted circa 1894—the women, differently placed, are dressed in the hooped skirts of about 1855, a contrast with the slim figures of the later picture. A large painting, exhibited in the New English Art Club in 1893, now belongs to the Dieppe Museum; and a small one ( $5 \times 9$  ins.) painted much later than those already mentioned is in the S.A. National Art Gallery, Capetown. A pen and wash drawing belonged to Jacques-Emile Blanche, this was reproduced in Fred Wedmore's *Some of the Moderns* published in London, 1909; an etching in reverse is reproduced below.

### 13a. THE OLD HOTEL ROYAL, DIEPPE

The theme is the same as the painting reproduced above, but there are railings around the lawns and the etching is printed in reverse.

*Etching. Size  $4\frac{1}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$  ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Etched circa 1905.*

### 14. THE HAUNTED HOUSE, DIEPPE

A close-up view of buildings at the corner of a street. In left-hand bottom corner some

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barrels; in foreground a road runs diagonally to disappear on left of canvas, another road crosses it at right angles in middle distance. Figures are seen on the pavement in front of the shops. Paint is smooth and rich in texture, the architectural features of the buildings have been used to make a bold pattern.

*Oil on canvas. Size 22 × 18 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted circa 1900.*

Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 87.  
Formerly in the possessions of Sir William Eden, Bt., and Mrs. Clifton.  
Present owner the Hon. John Fremantle.

### 5. THEATRE DE MONTMARTRE, PARIS

A view inside the theatre showing members of audience seated in two tiers of boxes which are placed diagonally across the canvas from right foreground. The upholstery is deep red decorated with blue, white and red striped awning. The audience, looking towards the stage, which is on the left but not visible, forms dark mass against the positive red background. Paint smooth, picture low in tone.

*Oil on canvas. Size 19½ × 24 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted circa 1900.*

Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 14.  
Present owner Lord Keynes.  
The drawing for this picture is reproduced below.

#### a. THEATRE DE MONTMARTRE

A study for the painting reproduced above. The lower tiers of seats, filled with people in the finished painting, are empty in the drawing, which is faintly squared and numbered.

*Pen and chalk, heightened with white. Size unknown. Signed 'Sickert Théâtre de Montmartre' in bottom right-hand corner. Drawn circa 1900.*

Present owner Dr. Moreland.

### 6. STATUE OF DUQUESNE, DIEPPE

The statue, enclosed by iron railings, is placed in the centre of the composition, the figure on its tall pedestal being strongly silhouetted against buildings and sky behind it. In foreground several children are standing; on extreme right a view up the street. Picture light in tone, pigment thin and smooth, handling sketchy and free.

*Oil on canvas. Size 51½ × 39½ ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted 1902. Present owners the Manchester City Art Gallery.*

The statue of Duquesne is in the Place Nationale, Dieppe. The picture is one of a set

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of four 'panels' (see also Pls. 17—19) commissioned by a Dieppe café proprietor as decorations for his restaurant. Sickert painted these between his second and third visits to Venice but when they were finished the 'patron' did not like them and they were sold to the American Consul in Dieppe, Mr. Frederick Fairbanks, who later disposed of them himself. A smaller version of this theme belongs to Capt. R. A. Peto.

### 17. BATHERS, DIEPPE

A group of bathers in the sea; some are entering the water, others—in right middle distance—are standing chatting; in bottom right-hand corner one bather is leaving the water. The positions of the three men in striped bathing costumes—back view with arms slightly raised—are almost identical. The sea is deep blue-green, against it the red and white striped costumes and the white foam of the small breakers make a lively and gay scheme.

*Oil on canvas. Size 51 × 40¾ ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted 1902. Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 5.*

Formerly in the possession of Frederick Fairbanks, Esq. (see also Pls. 16, 18, 19)  
Present owners the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool.

Sickert was himself a very strong and keen swimmer and whenever possible made a regular habit of his daily bathe.

### 18. RUE NOTRE-DAME, DIEPPE

A view of part of the church of Notre-Dame through a narrow alley-way leading out of Rue Notre-Dame, which runs across the foreground of the picture. The roofs of buildings and church are strongly silhouetted against the sky; the general tone is low but a brilliant light comes from the right, catching the dome of the church as well as the wall and street immediately beneath.

*Oil on canvas. Size 51½ × 39¾ ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted 1902. Formerly in the possession of Frederick Fairbanks, Esq. (see also Pls. 16, 17, 19) and the Duke of Westminster; sold by the last owner at Christie's, July 3rd, 1942.*

Present owner the Rt. Hon. Vincent Massey.

A smaller version of this theme (22 × 18 ins.) belongs to Morton Sands, Esq.; and there is a large rare etching of the identical subject with figures in the foreground, done in 1909.

### 19. ST JACQUES, DIEPPE

The west entrance of the church is seen in the middle distance; in left foreground two nuns are walking along the road towards it; on extreme right the façades of buildings in front of which, on pavement, several figures are indicated. The picture is dramatic in feeling, the sky ranges from deep blue to grey, the upper part of the church is flooded in a golden light. At the bottom of the canvas the artist has inscribed in large printed letters 'Eglise Saint-Jacques', but this has been painted over, presumably by Sickert, and the words are just faintly visible.

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*Oil on canvas. Size 51½ × 39½ ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted 1902. Formerly in the possession of Frederick Fairbanks, Esq. (see also Pls. 16—18); and the Duke of Westminster; sold by the last owner at Christie's July 3rd, 1942. Present owner Royan Middleton, Esq.*

### 20. MAMMA MIA POVERETTA

Half-length portrait of an old woman seated in a room slightly to the right of the picture. Head turned a quarter right, wearing patterned scarf over hair, and dark brown coat. Behind her the washstand, its curtains tied with pink ribbons; in left background a tall Venetian candlestick stands on a chest-of-drawers. Picture low in key, general tone brown, with touches of salmon pink. A strong light plays on the sitter's face and on objects behind her. Fine canvas, smooth underpainting with bold strokes indicating high-lights.

*Oil on canvas. Size 18 × 15 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in top right-hand corner. Painted circa 1903. Exhibited Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1939; 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 71.*

Reproduced 'Sickert' catalogue; pub. Eldar Gallery, London, 1919 (Pl. 1.)

Present owner Arthur Crossland, Esq.

This old Venetian woman, the mother of 'La Giuseppina' sat many times for Sickert during his stay in Venice 1903-5. Another portrait of her in the same clothes belongs to the Manchester Art Gallery and a third to Mark Oliver, Esq. The room is Sickert's top-floor studio in the calle dei Frati (see also Frontispiece, Pl. 22, and probably Pl. 23).

### 21. THE HORSES OF ST MARK'S

A close-up view of the upper central tympanum. In the lower half of the picture, the four horses; in the upper part the angels round the summit of the arch flanked on either side by the niches with their turrets. The general tone of the façade is grey against a deep blue sky; the gold star pattern in the upper part of the arch and the gold of the angels make sparkling accents. The horses are in strong shadow and, despite the title of the picture, do not play an important part in the pattern.

*Oil on canvas. Size 24½ × 19 ins. Signed 'Sickert 1901' in bottom right-hand corner.*

Exhibited 'British Art Exhibition' Amsterdam, 1936; 'A Whistler and Early Twentieth Century Oils' National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 9.

Present owner the Earl of Crawford and Balcarres.

Another version of this subject almost identical, but smaller (20 × 15½ ins.), formerly belonging to George Moore, is now owned by Raymond Evershed, Esq., K.C. A drawing in reverse, in black and red chalk, belongs to Walter Howarth, Esq., F.R.C.S.; there are other drawings and an etching published by Carfax and Co., St. James'. The

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drawing of the façade of St. Mark's (Pl. 11a) helps to place the detail selected by Sickert for the above painting.

### 22. THE BERIBBONED WASHSTAND

In the centre foreground a girl in the nude is seated on a chair. Facing quarter right, arm away from spectator rests on chair back, opposite leg crossed over the other. Face in profile, hair drawn to top of head which is slightly lowered. Behind her the draped washstand; to left a tall candlestick on corner of chest of drawers; to right a china bowl standing on floor. Underpaint thin, high lights put in with bold swift strokes, general handling free and sketchy.

*Oil on canvas. Size unknown. Signed 'Sickert' top right-hand corner. Painted circa 1903. Present owner Mark Oliver, Esq.*

The sitter is probably 'La Giuseppina', the interior—almost identical with Pl. 20—is the room in calle dei Frati as also Frontispiece.

### 23. RESTING

A three-quarter length study of 'La Giuseppina' lying on bed facing spectator. The bed is placed diagonally across canvas from top left corner. She wears a pale lemon blouse, maroon skirt, hair dressed on top of head; her hand rests on edge of bed on white sheets. Smooth thin underpaint which is seen in background; rest of the surface broken by shimmering lights and deep shadows; strong definite strokes indicate lights and shadows on face.

*Oil on canvas. Size 15 × 18 ins. Unsigned. Painted circa 1903.*

Exhibited Chicago and Pittsburgh, 1938; Tate Gallery, 1939; 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 44.

Formerly in the possessions of J. L. Rayner, Esq., and Howard Bliss, Esq.

Sold at Sotheby's December 14th, 1932.

Present owner Raymond Evershed, Esq., K.C.

'La Giuseppina' posed for Sickert many times (see Frontispiece, Pls. 22 and 23a). There is another version of this theme called *La Giuseppina* belonging to Dr. Emmons and reproduced by him. (*op. cit.* p. 112.)

### 23a. NUDE, VENICE

An almost full-length study of a nude standing. Facing right, both arms resting on cupboard in front of her; head lowered, face in profile; towel hanging on rail to left.

*Pen and black chalk heightened with white on grey paper. Size 10½ × 8 ins. Signed 'Sickert-Venezia' in foreground. Drawn circa 1903.*

Present owners the Leicester Galleries.

The model is 'La Giuseppina' (see also Frontispiece, and Pls. 22, 23.)

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### 24. THE LADY IN THE GONDOLA

Head-and-shoulders portrait of Mrs. George Swinton against the background of a Venetian canal. Head turned a quarter right, thrown slightly back, eyes lowered. Hair dressed in deep roll round the head; wearing black dress with high neck-line. Broad final strokes for light passages over smooth underpainting.

*Oil on canvas. Size 20 $\frac{3}{4}$  × 16 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Signed 'Rd. St-A.R.A.' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted 1905-6.*

Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition' National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 7.

Reproduced *Some of the Moderns*, Frederick Wedmore, London, 1909.

Present owner Walter Howarth, Esq., F.R.C.S.

Mrs. Swinton, a noted singer, was a close friend of Sickert's. He has painted various portraits of her which it has not been possible to trace. A small replica of the picture reproduced above was given by the artist to Lady Vala Machelas as a wedding present; another was sold at Sotheby's in December, 1932.

The portrait was painted in London after Sickert's return from his third visit to Venice. He was not elected A.R.A. until 1924, so that the picture must have been signed many years after it was painted.

### 25. NUDE AT MIRROR

A full-length, back view of a woman in the nude, standing looking at herself in a long mirror to the left of the canvas. Arms raised in front of her, her reflection as far as the thighs can be seen. Picture very low in tone. General colours green and red-brown, patch of purple in right bottom corner; strongest high-light is touch of yellow at back of head. Paint smooth, surface of nude broken by patches of quiet colour.

*Oil on canvas. Size 24 × 19 $\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted circa 1907.*

Exhibited Chicago and Pittsburgh, 1938; Tate Gallery, 1939; 'British Painting since Whistler' National Gallery, London, 1940, No. 190; 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 4.

Formerly in the possession of Judge Evans.

Present owner, Howard Bliss, Esq.

The model is 'Sally' of whom Sickert has done many 'nude' studies in drawings and etching. One drawing of her, standing full face next to a washstand, is in my possession; an etching, also at the washstand but seen side view, is reproduced in Emmons, *op. cit.* p. 5.

### 26. THE NEW BEDFORD

A view inside the theatre looking across the heads of the audience towards the stage-box. In foreground the audience with orchestra-pit on left; in centre of picture the



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box, with three occupants, flanked on either side by two large baroque-like decorations of nudes; in top right corner a glimpse of the gallery can be seen. The house is in darkness, the picture being lit by brilliant lights coming from the stage, casting deep shadows on the wine-red upholstering and sparkling with jewel-like effect on the gold decorations. Paint thick with fine scrumbling all over canvas.

*Oil on canvas. Size 36 × 14 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted circa 1906-7.*

Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 97.

Formerly in the possession of Hugh Hammersley, Esq.

Present owner Dr. Robert Emmons.

There are various other oils of this subject as well as numerous drawings and two etchings. A large canvas (72 × 28½ ins.) is in the Temple Newsam Gallery, Leeds; this—despite some controversy—is painted in tempera and varnished. This picture was intended as part of a decoration for Miss Ethel Sands' house in Chelsea; there were other 'panels' left unfinished, photographs of which, together with the drawing for the dining-room with the panels indicated, are also at Temple Newsam. Another version, in oils, belongs to Sir Edward Marsh, it was painted about 1915. A squared drawing, a study for the above picture, was reproduced in *The New Age*, June 29th, 1911; an etching is reproduced below.

### 16a. THE NEW BEDFORD

A view of the interior of the theatre seen from a slightly different angle than the painting reproduced above.

*Etching. Size 21½ × 6½ ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand margin. Etched circa 1907.*

There is a smaller etching (8 × 2½ ins.) which has slight variations.

### 27. THE MANTELPIECE

The main part of this composition is devoted to the mantelpiece in the middle of the picture, on which many china ornaments stand; to the grate, from the depths of which a fire glows; and to the mirror above. On extreme left a young woman is seen doing her hair, both arms are raised at the back of her head and her reflection, as well as that of the ornaments and other objects in the room, plays an important part in the pattern. She is wearing a rose-coloured blouse and black skirt. The underpainting is smooth; the lower half of the canvas is an almost unrelieved dark mass; the surface of the upper half is broken by sensitive nervous strokes indicating the high-lights, making the low-toned picture sparkle.

*Oil on canvas. Size 30 × 20 ins. Unsigned. Painted circa 1907.*

Exhibited Art Club, Chicago, January, 1938; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, February, 1938; 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 6.

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

Purchased in 1932 by the Trustees of the Frederick William Bequest and given by them to the present owners, the Southampton Corporation Art Gallery.

### 8. THE CAMDEN TOWN MURDER

A nude figure of a woman lying on a bed placed horizontally across the canvas. Her head, turned away from the spectator, is on extreme right; her arm extended at her side and only the upper half of her body is visible, her legs being hidden behind the figure of a man seated, full face, on the foot of the bed. He is in his shirt sleeves, elbows resting on knees, head bowed in a position of complete despondency. The wall behind is covered with a patterned paper. Underpaint thin showing in places rather coarse canvas; over this a heavy impasto. Strong light coming from the right playing upon the shoulders and breast of the woman, and upon the white of the bed-clothes and man's shirt.

*Oil on canvas. Size 10 × 14 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted circa 1907.*

Purchased by the present owner direct from the artist, owned privately in England.

The Camden Town Murder took place in September, 1907. The victim was strangled in her bed and the murder created a great stir. Many of Sickert's compositions 'à deux' have been loosely titled *Camden Town Murder*, it is a subject with which his name has become pictorially connected. Sickert himself frequently gave different titles to similar compositions, hence the drawing for the above is reproduced by Emmons (*op. cit.* p. 130) as *What shall we do for the Rent?* This is rather confusing as there is an etching inscribed by Sickert with this title in which a man and a woman, their backs to the spectator, are sitting on a bed. Also the etching reproduced below is called *La belle Gâtée*, whilst a drawing of the same composition, reproduced in the Eldar Gallery catalogue 1919 and belonging to H. K. B. Lund, Esq., is entitled *Camden Town Murder*.

### 1a. LA BELLE GATEE

A man in shirt sleeves seated on a bed placed vertically down left side of paper. Behind him is curled the nude figure of a woman, her head and shoulders resting on his lap, she is looking up at him.

*Etching. Size unknown. Signed 'Sickert, 1908' in bottom left-hand corner. On lower margin there is an inscription in Sickert's handwriting which appears to read "Qui qu'est la Belle Gâtée à son Mimi".*

For a drawing of this subject see note above.

### 19. MORNINGTON CRESCENT

A nude is seen reclining on a bed placed horizontally across the middle of canvas, the head on the right. She faces the spectator, her body raised leaning on one elbow, feet

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 95, under title *Granby Street*.

Formerly in the possession of Judge Evans.

Present owner Alan Sainsbury, Esq.

The interior is the back room of the house on the corner of Mornington Crescent and Granby Street, seen from the front room. (See also Pls. 29, 29a, 32, 34.)

### 34. LITTLE RACHEL

Half-length portrait of a young girl in an interior, facing spectator, head turned slightly left. Wearing high-necked white blouse, hair hanging over shoulders and ear-rings. In left background the corner of window with Venetian blinds down, the oval mirror and dressing table in front of it. A strong light coming from the right plays on the sitter also catching the furniture behind her. Pigment thick with rich impasto.

*Oil on canvas. Size 24 × 20 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted circa 1907.*

Present owner Dr. R. Emmons.

'Little Rachel' was a young model whom Sickert frequently painted. There is a drawing for this picture, in which the model is seen three-quarter-length, arms showing and iron bedstead visible to the right behind her, and an oil, almost identical with the one reproduced above but of different proportions (24 × 12 ins.) belonging to Samuel Carr, Esq. The interior is the first-floor back room of the house at the corner of Granby Street and Mornington Crescent. (See also Pls. 29, 29a, 32-33.)

### 35. GRANBY STREET

A woman, seen in an interior, is seated full-length in centre of picture. She faces left, one hand in lap, the other resting on sofa, face in profile. Wearing dark skirt and light bodice which has slipped off her shoulders revealing her breasts. In front of her a chair, behind her to left, French windows and long lace curtains which sift the light as it floods into the room. Painted in low tones, full of broken, subtle colours—greens, magenta, purple, grey and dark brown; rich impasto covering canvas.

*Oil on canvas. Size 20½ × 16 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted circa 1909.*

Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 89, entitled *Mornington Crescent*.

Formerly in the possession of Miss Sylvia Gosse to whom it was given by the artist.

Present owner Dr. R. Emmons.

The interior is the first-floor front room of the house at the corner of Granby Street and Mornington Crescent.

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

### 36. JACQUES-EMILE BLANCHE

A full-face head and shoulders portrait of the painter. Wearing top-hat, black coat with velvet collar and white scarf. Behind sitter, tops of canvases are seen, their stretchers making a line of orange against the yellow-brown of the wall. Picture fairly light in tone; coarse canvas can be seen through the paint in the background; face painted in almost 'Pointillist' manner.

*Oil on canvas. Size 24 × 20 ins. Unsigned. Painted 1909.*

Reproduced in *Portraits of a Lifetime: Memoirs of Jacques-Emile Blanche*, publ. Dent, 1937, p. 117.

Formerly in the possession of Miss Hilda Trevelyan.

Present owners the Tate Gallery, Millbank.

Blanche and Sickert were close friends all their lives; they were much together in Dieppe where Blanche had a villa. He was born in 1861 and died in 1942. The portrait was painted at Rowlandson House.

### 37. MISS HUDSON AT ROWLANDSON HOUSE

A full-length portrait showing Miss Hudson standing at the window in the background, looking at spectator. One hand is on her hip, the other rests on window sill; wearing large hat with sweeping plumes and long dress; in front of her, in foreground of picture, a circular pedestal table. The figure is silhouetted against the light entering through the window; picture warm in tone, fairly light in key, general colours black, brown, blue-grey and lavender.

*Oil on canvas. Size 36 × 20 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted 1912.*  
Present owner Miss Hudson.

The sitter was one of Sickert's life-long friends. Together with Miss Ethel Sands, she had a villa near his in Dieppe. After June 1940 these two ladies had to make their way to England leaving behind them, in Dieppe, many paintings by Sickert. The interior is a room in Rowlandson House, 140 Hampstead Road.

### 38. LE VIEUX COLOMBIER OR LA SCIERIE DE TOCQUEVILLE

A landscape with many felled trees in foreground, a dovecote in left middle-distance, corner of house on right, a meadow screened by trees in background. Picture light in tone, handling broad, sunlight casts deep purple shadows on the greens.

*Oil on canvas. Size 26 × 41½ ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted 1912.*  
Present owner W. Rees Jeffreys, Esq.

In a letter to Mr. Jeffreys, Sickert said of the picture 'Its proper title should be *La Scierie de Tocqueville*, a village in the valley of the Eaulne, a tributary of the river Arques which discharges into Dieppe Harbour'.

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

### 38a. VILLAS UNDER THE CLIFF—DIEPPE

The drawing is squared for painting, the artist having written copious notes on colour all over the page.

*Pen and ink. Size  $11\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Unsigned. Drawn 1920.*

Present owner unknown to me.

### 39. THE NEW HOME

A half-length portrait of a coster woman, seated in an interior, facing left, head turned looking at spectator. Wearing a shiny black straw hat, high-necked white blouse and fur coat; her hands rest in her lap. Behind her a gaily patterned wallpaper; on left the corner of mantelpiece on which stands a Victorian flower decoration under a glass case. Picture light in tone, figure forming a dark mass against the background; underpainting smooth, entire surface broken by final touches with loaded brush.

*Oil on canvas. Size  $20 \times 16$  ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted circa 1912.*

In the possession of the Temple Newsam Gallery, Leeds, from 1936-38, then exchanged by the owners for another painting by Sickert—*Rue St. Jacques*.

Present owner A. J. L. McDonnell, Esq., Sydney, Australia.

### 40. SUNDAY AFTERNOON

Interior of a room, showing head and shoulders of man in shirt sleeves seated on bed in right foreground; young woman leaning against foot of bed in middle distance behind him. She stands facing left with head turned towards spectator, dressed in white blouse and long dark skirt. In background a dressing table with square mirror behind which long window curtains are draped. The picture is low in key though not very dark and is a study in cool tones of greys and purple. The paint is laid on thickly giving a rich quality of pigment; the scene is lit from the right, no light enters through the window.

*Oil on canvas. Size  $20 \times 12$  ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted 1912.*

Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 58.

Present owner Bernard Falk, Esq.

The interior is the studio up Mornington Crescent (see also Pl. 41); the models are 'Hubby' (see Emmons, *op. cit.* p. 139) and Sickert's servant, Marie Hayes.

### 41. THE BLUE HAT

A young girl seated in centre of picture before a dressing table which is in front of an open window on right of canvas. She has turned in the chair to face the spectator, one arm over back of chair, the other hand pulling drawer of table. Wearing large blue hat, white blouse and brown skirt; Sickert has painted her smiling—which is

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

unusual. Across foreground, the bed; pictures on wall behind. The grain of the coarse canvas can be seen through the thin paint all over the picture, which is light in tone; the handling is free and sketchy. The youthful vivacity of the young sitter and the feeling of sunlight flooding the room, are beautifully expressed.

*Oil on canvas. Size 20 × 16 ins. Painted circa 1913.*

Present owners the Manchester City Art Gallery, Rutherford Collection.

The Interior is the studio up Mornington Crescent. (See also Pl. 40.)

### 42. ENNUI

An interior, showing a man seated half-length in foreground with a woman leaning on a chest of drawers behind him. The man, facing right, leans slightly backwards smoking a cigar, which he holds in the hand nearest the spectator; the woman, facing left, wears a white blouse and dark skirt, her attitude is one of complete boredom. On the chest stands a Victorian flower decoration in glass case, a picture hangs on the wall behind. The background is yellowish-green, the man's suit brown, general tones are warm and light. Underpainting thin and smooth, broad, swift strokes indicate highlights.

*Oil on canvas. Size 20 × 16 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted circa 1913.*

Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, 1935; Chicago and Pittsburgh, 1938; Tate Gallery, 1939; 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 64.

Formerly in the possession of Howard Bliss, Esq.

Present owner H.M. the Queen.

There are several versions of this theme in various sizes and with slight differences in composition. A large oil (60 × 44 ins.) and highly finished, belongs to the Tate Gallery, Millbank; a smaller one (16 × 13 ins.) to Dr. Cobbledick; another to Edward G. Robinson, the American film actor; there is also one, painted in 1918 at 15 Fitzroy Street, with the figures against a patterned wallpaper, whose whereabouts is unknown to me. The models are 'Hubby' and Marie, the interior is a room on the corner of Mornington Crescent and Granby Street. There are also various drawings which I have not been able to trace, as well as some etchings.

### 43. THE SOLDIERS OF KING ALBERT THE READY

A group of three Belgian soldiers firing from behind a cart. They are placed diagonally down the canvas, facing right. The head of the first, who is lying on the ground taking aim, comes in the right foreground; the second kneels on one leg above and in front of him; the third stands full length, his head coming at the top of the canvas to the left. The three rifles form parallel lines on right of picture; behind them circle the wheels of the cart. On left, the window of a building in front of which is a barrel; in extreme

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

right foreground, the head and shoulders of a wounded or dead soldier lying on his back with arms above head. Picture light in key, paint thin and smooth showing grain of canvas.

*Oil on canvas. Size 78 × 58 ins. Signed 'Sickert 1914' in top left-hand corner.*

Exhibited Royal Academy, 1914; New English Art Club, November, 1914; Brighton, 1915; Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh; Bradford and Liverpool, 1933; Tate Gallery, 1934-40; 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 13.

Present owner G. P. Dudley Wallis, Esq.

The picture represents a definite incident in the defence of Liège during the Great War of 1914-18. It was painted from a press photograph as a tribute to King Albert and the Belgian Army, and was sold for the benefit of the Belgian Relief Fund. Sickert got Belgian soldiers to pose for him in his studio in Red Lion Square where he painted the picture.

### 44. SUSPENSE

A woman, seen full length in an interior, seated on a chair facing right; she is slightly to the left of the canvas, behind her is a door. In white blouse, dark skirt, hair hanging down her back, hands clasping knee, head raised as if watching a clock on the mantelshelf above her. Picture light in tone with much use of purple.

*Oil on canvas. Size 30 × 23 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted circa 1916.*

Reproduced in colour in the Eldar Gallery catalogue, 1919, Pl. IX.

Purchased in 1929 by the Contemporary Art Society from a fund bequeathed to the Belfast Art Gallery by a local collector, Sir Robert Lloyd Patterson. Present owners the Belfast Municipal Museum and Art Gallery, Sir R. Lloyd Patterson Collection.

The interior is a room in Fitzroy Street. There is a very large oil of this theme which was exhibited at the London Group, at Heal's Mansard Gallery in 1917, its present whereabouts is unknown to me. There are also two drawings; one in the possession of Dr. Emmons and reproduced by him (*op. cit.* p. 155). He has dated it 1912. Another drawing, the study for the painting reproduced above, squared in red ink, belongs to Lord Methuen.

### 45. THE LITTLE TEA PARTY—NINA HAMNETT AND ROALD KRISTIAN

A man and woman are seated on a sofa placed diagonally across the canvas from the left foreground. He is seated on the left, leaning back against the wall, smoking a cigarette which he holds in his hand, the foot of one leg rests upon the knee of the other. His companion is seated on the foot of the sofa looking at him; wearing coat with fur collar, legs crossed, holding a cigarette in her hand. On extreme right a table with china jug, cup and bowl upon it; walls covered with striped paper. The composition is triangular, and the scene is lit from the right. Paint smooth, handling free, small

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

sensitive strokes indicate high lights; general colour warm brown with touches of salmon pink, blue and white.

*Oil on canvas. Size 10 × 14 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted 1916.*  
Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 38; 'Tate Gallery's Wartime Acquisitions,' National Gallery, London, 1942, No. 113.  
Formerly in the possessions of Miss Sylvia Gosse and Howard Bliss, Esq.  
Present owners the Tate Gallery, Millbank.

The picture was painted at No. 8 Fitzroy Street—formerly Whistler's studio.

### 45a. THE NAPOLEON III TOBACCO JAR

In left foreground a circular table on which stands the tobacco jar fashioned in the image of Napoleon III. Behind it a girl asleep on a sofa.

*Pen and black chalk heightened with white. Size 9½ × 12 ins. Unsigned. Drawn circa 1917.*  
Present owner Mrs. Sickert.

The jar was a great favourite of Sickert's, it appears in various paintings. A small oil (10 × 14 ins.) of the subject reproduced above belongs to the Leicester Galleries, while a larger version (18 × 24 ins.), with some differences in composition, is in the possession of Maresco Pearce, Esq.

### 46. CAMDEN TOWN

Half-length portrait of a girl seated facing right with head turned looking at spectator. Hair 'bobbed', in blue and white striped blouse, hat on cupboard behind her head. In right background, an iron bedstead. The painting is in a somewhat lighter key than the earlier 'Camden Town' pictures, whose cool, pearly tones have given way to umber browns. The canvas is fine and the final touches are laid on freely and broadly over the smooth underpainting.

*Oil on canvas. Size 20 × 16 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted circa 1916.*

Exhibited Bradford Art Gallery, Jubilee Exhibition, 1930; Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1939; 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 48. Reproduced 'Sickert Catalogue' pub. Eldar Gallery, 1919, Pl. 3.

Present owner Arthur Crossland, Esq.

The interior is the room at No. 8 Fitzroy Street.

### 47. PULTENEY BRIDGE, BATH

The river Avon, looking towards Pulteney Bridge, which can be seen in the background. On left, the sloping banks with railings; in middle distance the rushing waters of the weir, to the right of which, trees on the bank. Purple plays an important part in the scheme of colour, also light green and golden brown. The picture is light in key, pigment smooth, thin, and freely handled.

*Oil on canvas. Size 20 × 27½ ins. Unsigned. Painted 1917.*



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Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 3.  
Present owner Walter Howarth, Esq., F.R.C.S.

Sickert painted many versions of this subject with slight variations in composition. Most of these were painted about 1917-18, such as one belonging to Dr. Emmons and reproduced by him (*op. cit.* p. 188); a small one ( $14\frac{1}{2} \times 18\frac{1}{2}$  ins.) formerly belonging to Harcourt Johnstone, Esq., exhibited in the 'British Art Exhibition', Paris, 1938, and in 'British Painting Since Whistler', National Gallery, 1940, and now in the possession of Colin Anderson, Esq.; one of a similar size formerly in the possession of Sir Michael Sadler and now belonging to Sir Austen Harris; and another owned by Sir George Sutton, Bt. Two versions painted at a much later date are *Christine at Bath* circa 1932, whose present whereabouts is unknown to me; and the canvas ( $32 \times 36$  ins.) belonging to Mrs. Ricardo which was painted in 1939. There are also various drawings of this theme. One belongs to the Temple Newsam Gallery, Leeds; another is reproduced below.

### 47a. PULTENEY BRIDGE, BATH

Drawing for the painting above, squared and diagonally 'squared.'

*Pen and wash. Size  $9 \times 11\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Unsigned. Drawn 1917.*

Exhibited Cartwright Memorial Hall, Bradford; 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 99.

Present owner Alfred Jowett, Esq.

### 48. BELVEDERE, BATH

A view in the town looking down the hill. Horse and cart in right foreground, the curve of the road in left; buildings on either side of street; mass of trees covering hill in background. Picture light in tone, handling very free; scene bathed in brilliant sunlight of a midsummer day.

*Oil on canvas. Size  $26\frac{1}{2} \times 27$  ins. Unsigned. Painted circa 1917-18.*

Exhibited 'Tate Gallery's Wartime Acquisitions', National Gallery, London, 1942, No. 123.

Present owners the Tate Gallery, Millbank, to whom it was bequeathed by Lady Henry Cavendish-Bentinck.

Another version called *Beechen Cliff* is in the Bath Art Gallery; a drawing for the picture is reproduced below.

### 48a. BELVEDERE, BATH

A study for the picture reproduced above, faintly squared for painting.

*Pen. Size  $12 \times 10$  ins. Unsigned. Drawn circa 1917-18.*

Present owner Mrs. Sickert.

Another drawing of this theme, very detailed and also squared for painting, is called *Beechen Cliff*—its whereabouts is unknown to me.

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### 49. MR. SHEEPSHANKS' HOUSE, BATH

The house, standing on the crest of the hill, occupies the left half of the composition; its garden is enclosed by a low wall. In centre foreground a street lamp on edge of pavement; behind, the curve of the crescent; in right foreground the hill drops down steeply. As in all these 'Bath' landscapes, the heat of a midsummer day is beautifully suggested; the vast blue sky is flecked with white clouds, the shadows are deep purple, the green, bright and fresh. Paint fairly thin revealing in places the squaring on canvas; handling very free.

*Oil on canvas. Size  $24\frac{1}{2} \times 30\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner and inscribed by the artist 'Mr. Sheepshanks' House, Camden Crescent, Bath'. Painted circa 1917-18.*

Present owners the Durban Museum and Art Gallery, Natal, S.A.

Mr. Sheepshanks, the owner of the house, was the brother of the Astronomer Royal. There is a small 'upright' study of this subject ( $13 \times 9\frac{1}{2}$  ins.) on panel, belonging to Walter Howarth, Esq., F.R.C.S.; it was exhibited in the 'Sickert Exhibition' at the National Gallery, 1941. Another ( $14 \times 10$  ins.) formerly in the possession of Harcourt Johnstone, Esq., was sold at Sotheby's in June, 1940, and now belongs to Mrs. Syrie Maugham. A larger one ( $30 \times 24$  ins.) is in the possession of J. W. Freshfield, Esq.

### 49a. LANSDOWNE CRESCENT, BATH

A view of the Crescent with railings in left foreground and buildings circling round behind in middle distance; a figure stands under the lamp-post almost in centre of composition.

*Etching and Engraving. Size  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Unsigned (in this second state). Etched probably about 1918.*

There are paintings and drawings of this theme as well as an etching ( $5\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$  ins.); also a larger etching-engraving ( $9 \times 11$  ins.).

### 50. PARADISE ROW, BATH

A view looking down a slope into a street on either side of which are houses. In right foreground, the turn of the railings, at bottom of which are steps; in right middle-distance, a house behind which the road curves; in background, a thickly wooded hill is seen behind the buildings. Picture very light in key, effect of strong sunlight; paint thin showing squared canvas in places; shapes in foreground drawn-in with brush.

*Oil on canvas. Size  $20 \times 17$  ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted circa 1917-18.*

Present owners the Manchester City Art Gallery, Rutherford Collection.

### 51. CHRISTINE DRUMMOND SICKERT, *Née* ANGUS, BUYS A GENDARMERIE

A woman seated in interior, at a table in centre foreground, facing right. In hand

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

nearest spectator she holds what is presumably a pen, as if in the act of signing a document. Wearing white blouse, dark skirt, hair done in bun at back of her head, she is sitting in a wooden chair with rounded back; face seen in profile. On corner of table, a lamp with green glass shade; behind, a picture hangs between the windows. The scene is lit by lamp on table; paint very thin and sketchy, parts of canvas being left uncovered to indicate high-lights. General effect is of black and white, with green reflections from lamp-shade.

*Oil on canvas. Size 22 × 17 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted 1919. Exhibited Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, 1933; Chicago and Pittsburgh, 1938; 'Sickert Exhibition,' National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 78. Present owner Alfred Jowett, Esq.*

For the subject of this picture see page 14.

### 72. VERNETS, DIEPPE

The interior of a café looking down a row of tables towards the artiste singing from the stage at the end of the room. In foreground, on left, empty tables; in centre of picture, back view of man seated at a table on which his elbow rests supporting his head. The singer has both arms outstretched, around her other people are seated. Room lit by dazzling lights from ceiling; general tones warm brown, red and yellow; pigment thin, handling very free.

*Oil on canvas. Size 29 × 20 ins. Signed 'Sickert 1920' in bottom right-hand corner. Present owners, the Executors of the late Geoffrey Blackwell, Esq.*

This picture is of the same period as the *Baccarat* series. Sickert frequently visited Vernets before going to the Casino at midnight. There is another painting of the same title (24 × 19½ ins.) and various drawings, but I do not know their present whereabouts.

### 73. THE TRAPEZE

The inside of a circus tent with the solitary figure of a trapeze artist standing on her platform, almost in centre of canvas, about to swing off. The lower half of the picture shows the sides of the tent, the poles propping it making shadow patterns against the canvas surround. The picture is light in key; the atmosphere is dramatic and filled with expectancy.

*Oil on canvas. Size 25 × 31½ ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted 1920. Exhibited 'Centenary Exhibition of the Norwich Museum'.*

Bequeathed by Frank Hindley Smith to the present owners, the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

The scene is a circus in Dieppe. Another painting of this subject, known as *Mlle Leah*, belongs to Mrs. Robert Mayer.

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### 53a. CIRCUS PONIES

A row of ponies standing in their stalls, which are arranged horizontally across the canvas and seen from behind.

*Pen and pencil drawing. Size  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Unsigned. Drawn circa 1920.*

Present owner Mrs. Sickert.

The drawing is on lined paper.

### 54. BACCARAT—THE FUR CAPE

A scene inside the Casino with a close-up view of a gaming-table. The entire foreground is occupied by back view of a woman, seated in upholstered chair and wearing a large hat and fur cape. More people are seated on right of picture; on left the 'croupier'; next to him, a woman in low-necked black dress and large hat is standing. In top left corner, the light hangs low over the table. Paint dry and thin showing grain of canvas; the brown-pink Sickert frequently used at this time being a predominant colour.

*Oil on canvas. Size  $22\frac{3}{4} \times 16\frac{3}{8}$  ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted 1920.*

Exhibited 'Tate Gallery's Wartime Acquisitions', National Gallery, 1942, No. 116. Bequeathed by Lady Henry Cavendish-Bentinck to the present owners, The Tate Gallery, Millbank.

Sickert painted a series of *Baccarat* pictures in the Dieppe Casino (see also Pl. 55). The drawings were made surreptitiously on post cards as the gamblers protested to the management against being drawn. Another version belongs to R. S. Humphrey, Esq., and is reproduced by Emmons (*op. cit.* p. 170); one to Mark Oliver, Esq., signed and dated 1920; and there is another inscribed '*à Mademoiselle Livache, souvenir de Walter et Christine Sickert*'.

### 55. BACCARAT

A scene inside the casino with a group of people seated round the table in the middle distance. The back view of the 'croupier' seated on his high chair is seen to the left; on his right a woman wearing a large hat is sitting sideways. Other people are sitting and standing round the table, two lights are suspended from ceiling. Foreground empty; paint thin and dry showing grain of canvas; general colours light green and red; figures outlined with dark brush strokes.

*Oil on canvas. Size  $20\frac{1}{2} \times 14\frac{1}{2}$  ins. Signed 'Sickert' bottom right-hand corner. Painted 1920.*

Exhibited 'Sickert Exhibition', National Gallery, London, 1941, No. 80.

Present owner Walter Howarth, Esq., F.R.C.S.

See also Pl. 54 and note giving other versions.

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### 56. LA PARISIENNE

A view through doorway into a room in which can be seen foot of a bed, in centre middle-distance. On right, leaning against door, the full-length figure of a woman in straw hat and a shawl; she is looking down on to the bed, her face is not visible. Painted in flat planes, pigment thin and rather dry, general colours olive green and brownish-pink with blue-purple shadows.

*Oil on canvas. Size 22 × 18 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner and dated. Formerly in the possession of G. F. Sandiford, Esq., then entitled Lola in Grey Cloak. Painted 1921.*

Present owner Sir Alexander Park Lyle.

Painted in a room in the furnished flat in Rue Aguado which Sickert took the year after Christine's death. The date on the picture is 1923, in which case the picture was signed two years after it was painted. There is a pen and wash drawing of the same theme (10½ × 8½ ins.) called *Lola*.

### 57. THE PREVARICATOR

An interior of a room showing the back view of a man standing with legs crossed and leaning against the foot of a solid wooden bed. The bed is placed at an angle vertically up the canvas, the head of a woman lying in it can just be seen beyond the man's elbow to the left. The paint is smooth, thin and dry; the background is olive green, the same colour as the woman's face and the man's suit, which has deep blue shadows; the furniture is brownish-pink.

*Oil on canvas. Size 20 × 16 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted 1921. Formerly in the possession of Lt.-Col. A. E. D. Anderson who presented it to the Red Cross Picture Sale at Christie's, October, 1942.*

Present owner S. Samuels, Esq.

As in Pl. 56, the room is the one in the Rue Aguado, where the well-known *L'Armoire à Glace*, now in the Tate Gallery, and *The New Tie* were also painted. There is an ink drawing of this subject (10½ × 8 ins.); and another (about 8½ × 7½) ink and wash, called *The Young Husband*, in the possession of W. K. Smith, Esq.

### 58. VICTOR LECOUR

Full-length portrait of a stout man with a beard standing in a room. Facing right, with head turned looking at spectator, his arms hanging at his sides. Behind him on left, a picture hanging on the wall; in right background a chair and table in front of a big window through which a street lamp can be seen. A strong light comes through the window striking the wall, with its patterned wallpaper, and playing around the figure of the man. Pigment dry and scrubbed.

*Oil on canvas. Size unknown. Signed 'Sickert 1924' in bottom left-hand corner. Painted 1922. Formerly in the possession of G. B. Blair, Esq., who bequeathed it to the present owners, the Manchester City Art Gallery.*

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

The interior is the room of another flat in the Rue Aguado, a little farther along the place than the flat in which Pls. 56 and 57 were painted. The picture being painted in 1922, it was signed—or perhaps finished—two years later. Victor Lecour was the proprietor of the Clos Norman at Martin Eglise; Sickert, in a letter, describes him as 'a superb creature—like a bear' (see Emmons, *op. cit.* p. 188). There is another portrait of a man painted in the same room, almost identical in composition, which is called *Rue Aguado* and is in the possession of Asa Lingard, Esq. This was exhibited in the 'Sickert Exhibition' at the National Gallery, 1941, No. 82, and described as '*Portrait of Victor Lecour*' which must be an error, the 'sitter' being a much younger and slimmer man, so that the two, painted about the same time, can hardly be reconciled.

### 59. SIGNOR BATTISTINI

A half-length portrait of the singer, performing. Facing a quarter right, wearing evening dress with white tie, holding a piece of music. Seen from close up, the top part of his body fills about three-quarters of the canvas. Extremely sketchy and broad in treatment; paint thin and fluid showing grain of canvas; green background, bistre coat, face magenta-pink.

*Oil on canvas. Size 29 × 20 ins. Unsigned. Painted 1925.*

Reproduced in Emmons (*op. cit.* p. 216).

Present owners the Beaux Arts Gallery, London.

The picture was painted from a study made in the front row of the stalls at the Queen's Hall.

### 60. THE SERPENTINE

A view in Kensington Gardens with two people seated back view under a big tree in left middle-distance. In foreground, the grass, over which the tree casts a deep shadow; in background, the water on which are boats. Dazzling sunlight suggesting midsummer day; light in key, paint freely and broadly handled.

*Oil on canvas. Size 16 × 20 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Painted circa 1925.*

Present owner Mrs. Rowley Bristow.

There are various drawings for this picture belonging to Miss Sylvia Gosse, one is reproduced below.

### 60a. THE SERPENTINE

A study for the picture reproduced above, the two figures, faintly drawn in pencil, are placed in the right middle distance.

*Pencil and wash heightened with white on grey paper. Size 8½ × 11½ ins. Unsigned. Drawn 1925.*

Present owner Miss Sylvia Gosse.

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

### 61. FADING MEMORIES OF SIR WALTER SCOTT

A view of the back gardens of a row of houses. The edge of the canal in the foreground; behind it a wall enclosing the sloping gardens, in one of which washing is hanging on a line. Underpainting thin covered in most places with scrubbling; picture rather low in key, general colours olive green and brown.

*Oil on canvas. Size 20 × 24 ins. Unsigned. Painted circa 1927.*  
In a private collection in France.

Painted in Sickert's studio in Noel Street, overlooking the Regent's Canal. The enigmatic title was presumably suggested by the 'Neo-Gothic' battlements round the buildings.

### 61a. HANGING GARDENS OF ISLINGTON

The back view of the house in Noel Street with its garden and brick wall. A woman is hanging washing on the line.

*Etching. Size 6½ × 4 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in bottom right-hand corner. Etched circa 1927.*  
Published by the Leicester Galleries, London, 1929, and also by the Savile Gallery, Bond Street.

There is a well-known oil of this subject.

### 62. THE RAISING OF LAZARUS

The figure of Lazarus, shrouded and lying on his back in the tomb, is placed vertically up the centre of the canvas. At top of picture the upper part of the figure of Christ can be seen bending over Lazarus' head over which he is passing his hands in the act of performing the miracle. In left foreground, the back of a woman—presumably Lazarus' sister—with hands raised in exclamation. The feeling is dramatic and full of tension; the predominating colours, wine-red, electric green and silvery-white.

*Oil on canvas. Size 96 × 36 ins. Unsigned. Painted 1928-9.*

Exhibited Royal Academy, Burlington House, 1932; New York World's Fair, 1939. Present owners the Beaux Arts Gallery, London.

There are two studies in oil for this picture. The original one was painted on the red wallpaper of Sickert's studio at No. 1 Highbury Place. This was removed when Sickert left the studio, laid on canvas, and now hangs in Mrs. Sickert's house at Bathampton. The other belongs to the Beaux Arts Gallery also, whose director, Major Lessore, (the artist's brother-in-law) presented Sickert with a life-size lay-figure, which, when being carried upstairs, suggested the subject of this picture. The painting reproduced above was given by Sickert to Sadler's Wells when the theatre was in financial difficulties. It was presented 'in memory of my perpetual adoration of Sam Phelps and my gratitude to Isobel Bateman, of whose Sadler's Wells company I was myself

## NOTES ON THE PLATES

a utility member' (see Emmons *op. cit.* p. 213). The picture was sold at Christie's for the theatre's benefit, December 2nd, 1932.

### 63. SIR NIGEL PLAYFAIR IN 'SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER'

A full-length portrait of the actor in the role of 'Tony Lumpkin'. He stands on right of canvas, facing left, arms hanging. In black peaked cap, puce coat, lemon waistcoat, buff breeches, and black riding-boots; behind, a landscape 'drop' curtain. Light in colour, pigment thin, handling very free.

*Oil on canvas. Size 70 × 49 ins. Signed 'Sickert' in top right-hand corner. Painted 1928. Exhibited Royal Academy, Burlington House, 1929; and the 'Little Theatre', Bath. Present owner Lady Playfair.*

The picture was painted at No. 1 Highbury Place, and was presented to Sir Nigel Playfair by fellow artists and workers in January, 1929, to celebrate his tenth anniversary of management at the Lyric, Hammersmith. Sickert gave the money subscribed to the Sadler's Wells Theatre Fund.

### 64. 'TURPE SENEX MILES TURPE SENILIS AMOR'—THE FRONT AT HOVE

A view of the Front with three people seated on bench in left foreground. In this group is a self-portrait of the artist, wearing a bowler hat, a beard, sitting with legs crossed and talking to a woman on the left, in a black fur coat. The third figure, a man in a top hat, is seated on the other side of the bench looking towards the crescent in the right middle distance. Effect of strong sunlight, the buildings gleam against the sky; pigment thin, smooth and fluid, handled very freely.

*Oil on canvas. Size 25 × 30 ins. Signed 'Sickert '30' in bottom left-hand corner. Present owners the Tate Gallery, Millbank.*

Sickert's Latin title is taken from Ovid's 'Amores' 1. IX. lines 1-4: ("An old soldier is a sorry thing and sorry too is senile love.")







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